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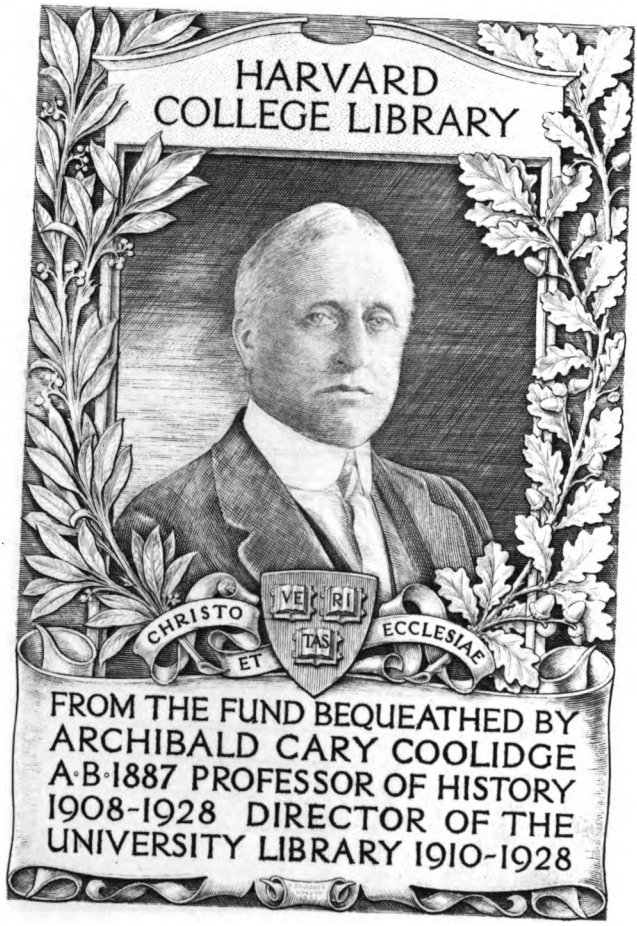

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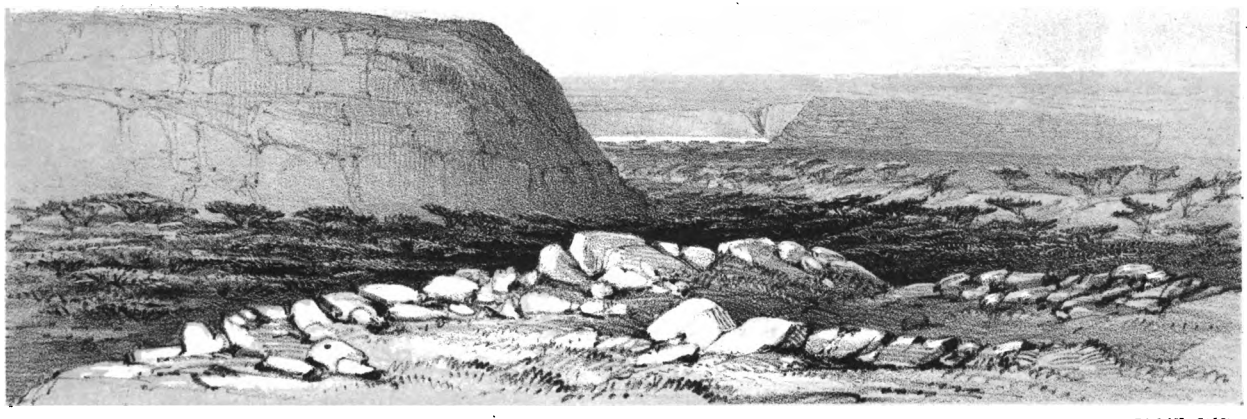

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VIEW OF ABHIBHAD LAKE, FROM SANKARL.

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TRAVELS

IN

SOUTHERN ABYSSINIA,

THROUGH

THE COUNTRY OF ADAL

TO

THE KINGDOM OF SHOA.

BY

CHARLES JOHNSTON, M.R.C.S.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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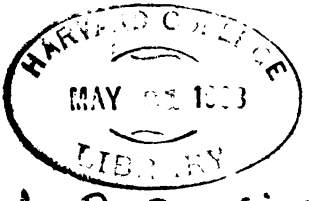

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ERRATUM.

Page 106, 14 lines from bottom, *transpose* the words *Apis* and *Serapis*, with *Abi* and *Assaabi* of the next line.

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TRAVELS IN SOUTHERN ABYSSINIA,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Staying at Farree.—Alarm of Galla attack.—Return to Kokki.—Women of Kafilah carried into slavery.—Five Gallas killed.—Triumph of Hy Soumaulee victors.—Return to Dinnomalee.—The Wallasmah Mahomed.—Seizure of the letters.—Return to Farree.

May 23.—I had scarcely opened my eyes, after the first night's rest in Abyssinia, when a heavy knocking at the door, and repeated calls for me, made me get up in a great hurry to know the reason of such a disturbance. I found the escort all in an uproar, and they pushed past me into the house for their weapons, where they had been safely deposited under my care, and which, as soon as they were seized, away my friends ran, one after another, in the direction of Dinnomalee. Ohmed Medina, who had suddenly sprung up from somewhere, sat upon his mule in the market-place, and

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was shouting for me to come, whilst one of his slaves was hastily saddling my mule also. I could not make out what was the matter, but as the word "Galla" was in the mouth of every one, I suspected that an attack had been made upon the stores during the night by those marauders, and began to be afraid that I had calculated too surely upon their being safe when at Dinnomalee.

Getting myself ready as quickly as possible, I was soon galloping along the road, following Ohmed Medina. We stayed not a moment at Dinnomalee, but a look satisfied my greatest anxiety; for the stores were all safe, and I cared for nothing else, so with a mind much easier, I called out to Ohmed Medina, for the first time, to ask what, and where the disturbance was. He only turned his face towards me, as he called out "Dophan," and "Galla," urging his mule on as he spoke, as if he wished he had wings to fly at once to the little town of half-civilized Wahamas, we had passed yesterday on this side of Kokki. We overtook, and gradually left behind us, all the Hy Soumaulee, who, in a far-a-part, straggling line, were hastening to the rescue. As we came up to each of these, a vain attempt was made to keep alongside of us, but our pace was too good, and we entered alone the small densely-wooded valley, then along the deep ravine, and at length pulled up on the camping ground we had left yesterday morning, when the leading camels of the Hy Soumaulee Kafilah came in sight, and where

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they had halted for the night; the greater part of the Tajourah camels alone coming on after us to Dinnomalee the same day.

On our arrival, preparations were being hastily made by the Kafilah to proceed on the march to Dinnomalee; all seemed conscious they had stayed in this place a night too long, and anxious to get away before any other mishap should happen. Some busy talkers surrounded Ohmed Mahomed and Ebin Izaak, who had come in a few minutes before us, and were listening to details of the deeds of blood, the evidences of which were five still bleeding bodies, that lay naked in different places upon the little green sloping bank that rose from the stream, and upon which the encampment stood.

Carmel Ibrahim and another of my escort were busy paring the skin of a goat, just killed, into the little twisted "symbil," or ornaments, with which it is usual to adorn the head, wrists, ankles, and also the weapons of warriors who have slain a foe. Whilst thus employed, they sung in a sharp falsetto voice some song of triumph, their voices being elevated considerably, as every fresh comer from Dinnomalee arrived. Above us, to the left, the inhabitants of the little town were making sad lamentations, and loud sobbing cries over the dead body of one of their people who had been killed in the engagement.

From what we were now told, it appeared that a little before sunrise, several women of the Kafilah had gone down to a place at some distance from

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the camp, where the little stream spread out into a pool, to fill their affaleetahs and gourd-shells with water for the march. Here they were seized by a large body of Hittoo Gallas, who, during the night, had approached the Kafilah, and were lying concealed in this situation, awaiting for the camels to be loaded, so that after an attack they might drive them with their loads quickly away. On being discovered, the greater part seized the women and carried them away at once, whilst another body rushed over the little stream hoping still to be able to surprise the Kafilah before the men had assembled for its protection. One Dophanter man, who had followed the women, attempted to escape by running towards the camp, but a pursuing Galla launched his spear, and transfixed him through the back, so that a wound was visible under the breast, corresponding to the much larger one in the back. His cries, however, called the Hy Soumaulee to arms, of whom more than four times the number of the Galla collected immediately, and before the latter were aware of the strength of the party they were about to attack, they were too near to escape some retributive punishment. Immediately the Hy Soumaulee saw them commencing to retire, they were on their feet, following them fast down the little slope to the brook, and succeeded in killing five of the daring robbers, before they could ascend the opposite bank. The rest made good their retreat to the main body, who had now got some

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distance with the women, and together formed a force far too great for the Hy Soumaulee people to hope to attack it with advantage. They were obliged, therefore to halt, form a semicircular squatting line, and be passive spectators of their women, seven of whom belonged to the Kafilah, and three to the town of Dophan, being carried away into captivity.

Three Gallas were killed by spears, the others had been stabbed in the throat and chest, and probably died fighting fairly enough. Carmel Ibrahim was one happy man-slayer, and also the brother of Moosa, and they kept up their song of triumph all the time we stayed here, except when they took me to see the bodies of those they had killed. I observed that the Dankalli do not practise the brutal custom of disfiguring the slain, so common among the Amhara at the present time, and which was also a characteristic of Jewish warfare. The arms and shields, not only of the Gallas who had been killed, but also numerous others that the fugitives had thrown away, fell to the lot of those who picked them up in the latter case, and to the victors in the former. Two of the other successful Hy Soumaulee were so busy fixing in their own belts the newly-obtained knives, which were much better than their own, that they did not attempt to raise the song, like Carmel and his friend, who, perhaps, only did it to attract my attention. Ohmed Medina informed me that I must give them a present, and upon my asking why, he said it was the custom for masters

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so to reward brave servants. He assured me that the chief of the town of Dophan had already given them a goat, and that the Wallasmah would also do the same. Seeing that it was the general custom, and as they had only been doing their duty, not as aggressors, but as men defending their wives and property, I promised them a bullock. On my doing this they would insist upon decorating my head with a symbil, or wreath of twisted goatskin, like themselves, but I managed to induce them at last to place it on my hat instead. Before we left the ground, I asked Ohmed Medina, if the dead Gallas would be buried. He looked at me, rather astonished at the question, but thinking, I suppose, that I knew no better, he said, very shortly, "Koran yahklur" (the ravens will eat them).

Our curiosity being satisfied, we now followed the camels, already some distance on their way to Dinnomalee, conversing as we rode along upon the events of the morning. The Hy Soumaulee men were too excited to think of the captive girls taken from amongst them never to return, but several of the women of the Kafilah I noticed with tear-shot eye mourning the loss of some friend or relation. No usual occupation, such as plaiting the palm leaf into a broad ribbon, to be sewed afterwards into mats, filled their hands, no familiar salutations as I passed by enlivened the way with smiles, but each with a long rope fastened around the under jaw of a camel led strings of five or six

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of these animals, that followed in their peculiarly quiet manner, the path their sorrowing conductress pursued.

Myself and others of the party who were mounted soon went a-head, and had it not been for repeated stoppages on the road to relate to those still coming, all we had learned of the deed of blood, we should have returned to Dinnomalee by ten o'clock; as it was, the sun had passed the meridian when we arrived, and we found there an equally busy scene, but of a very different character, to the one we had been partial witnesses of at Dophan.

During our absence the Wallasmah Mahomed, attended by his brother, two sons, his scribe, and a whole host of armed followers, had come into Farree, and just at the moment we passed the first trees on our side that inclosed the open space where stood the stores, salt, and merchandise of our Kafilah, that officer and his party emerged from the jungly wood opposite; the Wallasmah riding upon a mule, the rest walking, and among these the bearers of the silver mounted shield, and the silver sword of office were most conspicuous.

The Wallasmah Mahomed, the hereditary Prince or Governor of Efat, imbodied my idea of a dull, sensual, yet cunning man. There was nothing in his countenance to recommend him; bloated, with a heavy stupid expression, a little relieved certainly by small restless eyes that glanced at me whenever

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he thought I was not looking at him. Perhaps his fleshy turned up nose might be termed by some physiognomists an aspiring feature, and his chubby mouth, from having lost all his teeth, or nearly so, was continually mumbling something or other, or else munching a little branch of wormwood. I will not charge him with being actually sober, nor would he, I think, have sworn upon the Koran that he was so himself; but a bad headache was pleaded for the narrow rag of blue cotton that bound a large fresh green leaf upon his forehead. This application, I was told, was to produce a sense of coolness in the part affected, and to aid its effects it was frequently wetted by an attendant with water from a gourd shell, carried for this purpose.

On my going up to speak to the old gentleman, who had already seated himself upon a mat in the round shade of one of the trees, he very politely drew up his legs more under him, and invited me with a wave of his hand to be seated by his side. An inspection of my carabine immediately followed this; putting it up to his shoulder he glanced his eye along the barrels, and then turned round, with a nod and a sly wink, as if he wished me to believe that he knew all about it. He now asked, through Ohmed Medina, if I had any letters, and never supposing that they would be taken from me, I told him there were two packets which I must deliver to the British Embassy at Ankobar

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that day if possible. Saying this, I got up, and pointing to the sun intimated that it would be too late unless I started; but immediately catching hold of the skirt of my blouse he pulled me down again, saying, "I must stay with him, for the King had ordered that I was to remain at Farree, and not go any farther into the country." This was fully explained by Ohmed Medina, who also told me that Ebin Izaak had been obliged to give up the letters and despatches whilst I had been talking to the old man.

I had been misled, though most unintentionally on the part of Mr. Cruttenden, by his information of the great honour and reverence with which the King of Shoa, Sahale Selassee, treated the members of our political mission, and I had supposed it was merely necessary for me to be the bearer of despatches from the coast, to be received with all cordiality and freedom from suspicion as to the motives of my visit on my arrival in Shoa. How disappointed I was may be imagined when, instead of being permitted to proceed at once to the residency in Ankobar, I found myself a prisoner; and on my telling the Wallasmah that my queen would be very angry when she came to hear of the letters being taken from me, he very coolly threatened to have me chained, confirming the interpretation of Ohmed Medina, by placing his two wrists together as if bound. As I saw he was in earnest, and that if I said any more it might,

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perhaps, place our ambassador in a worse position than what he seemed to be in, I restrained my feelings, and retired to think over my situation and what I conceived to be that of the mission in Shoa. Having sent a short note by a messenger the day before to Captain Harris, announcing my arrival, I postponed taking any decided steps until I received his answer, for I now contemplated making my escape back again, to take the news to Aden of the condition of our embassy, the members of which were stated to be prisoners like myself.

I had not sat alone long, when some of the Wallasmah's people came to tell me I must go to Farree with them. I asked for my mule, but found it had been taken away to have the benefit, as they significantly told me, of the King's own pasturage. There was nothing to be done but to accompany them; so telling some of the Hy Soumaulee to come to Farree the next morning to see me, and if I were not there to go on to Ankobar, I proceeded with my guides, or guards, to the same house I slept in the last night; and the ready smiling welcome, the little bustle to receive me cordially, I met with from the good-natured inmates, was some set-off to the brutal indifference of the state-gaoler; for such office also I found was filled by the head of the customs of Shoa, the Abigass, or frontier governor of Efat, the obsequious spiteful pluralist the Wallasmah Mahomed.

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I passed the night, having received no answer to my note from Ankobar, wishing for the day, still hoping that I might be mistaken in my fears, and that some of the members of the embassy would come to congratulate me on my safe arrival, and free me from the anxiety, restraint, and espionage I was now annoyed with; for two sentinels were constantly on duty in the little enclosure, and always present in the house, when I received visits even from my Hy Soumaulee friends.

The next day came, but no news from Ankobar. I amused myself as well as I could, writing up my notes and settling small accounts with my escort and those of the Kafilah people, from whose importunities on the road I had relieved myself by promises of presents in Shoa, and who now came for paper, needles, buttons, scissors, and razors. Almost all that I possessed was divided among them as some little return for their continued kindness and fidelity to me on the road; for I had little to complain of except the continual falsehoods and petty deceits practised invariably by the Tajourah people. Even Ohmed Medina was not altogether exempt from this failing; but it was from a motive of well-meant kindness, so that I should not be able to detect the number of instances that little attempts were made to impose upon me, and which he thought might lead to expostulation and angry discussions.

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CHAPTER II.

Detained at Farree.—No news from Ankobar.—Fear all is not right.—Escape from my confinement.—Reach Garcia Mulloo.—Followed by officers of Wallasmah.—Compromise matters.—Return to Farree.—Brutality of Wallasmah.—Planning escape to the coast with Hy Soumaulee.—Arrival of Mr. Scott from Ankobar.—Chief cause of my detention.

I STAYED in Farree anxiously awaiting some news from the embassy, until the 25th; but neither note nor messenger came to relieve the suspense I was in. The night before, Ohmed Medina, however, had called upon me, and told me that all was right as regarded their personal safety, but informed me that my note from the Dinnomalee had been intercepted by the Wallasmah, and that none of the English in Shoa knew that I was in the country. I made up my mind, on hearing this, to attempt getting to Ankobar the next morning, if it were possible; and accordingly, before it was light, opened the little wicket that served for the door, passed unobserved the two sentinels who lay wrapped up in their body cloths fast asleep, and was soon some distance on the wrong road; that is to say, the most circuitous one to Ankobar. I thought

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that I was not exactly right, and meeting some labourers going into the fields to work, I asked the way, by repeating the word, Ankobar. They were too much surprised to speak, but pointed in the direction of the road, and I left them staring after me with a wondering look, as if to ask what would come next. Having reached a village about five miles to the north-west of Farree, I found it impossible to go on, it having been one continual ascent along the roughest and most winding path that can well be imagined. Oppressed with difficulty of breathing, fatigued, and foot-sore, I turned toward the door of the first house, and sitting down on a stone, made signs that I wanted some water. Hereupon such a screaming was set up by the only inmates, two naked children, that it could not have been exceeded if I had intimated that they were about to be devoured. Their cries brought two other little girls, who came running round the house, but seeing me, promptly turned back, tumbling over each other to get out of the way, contributing as they lay not a little to the frantic roaring of the children inside.

The noise soon brought all the disposable people, men and women of all ages, who had not left the village for their labours in the fields, who soon recognised in their visitor a Gypt or Egyptian, as the Abyssinians call all white men. I was glad to find that the character seemed to be a very respected one, although the first evidence I had of it, was the

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numerous beggars for articles, the names of which I did not understand. They invited me into the house out of the sun, and a large wooden mortar was laid on its side for me to sit upon, whilst several women employed themselves scorching some coffee beans, in a coarse earthenware saucer over a little wood fire in the centre of a circular hearth, that occupied the middle of the room. The whole house consisted of this one apartment, the surrounding wall being composed of sticks placed close together, and about four feet high, upon which rested a straw thatched roof frame of light bamboo, well blackened with the smoke.

I had not long arrived at Garcia Mulloo, the name of the village, before I was followed by a large body of men armed with spears and staves, and dragging along with them, most unwillingly, my old grey mule. The misselannee of Farree, whom I knew, was at the head of the party, and appeared very well pleased to see me, addressing me with great politeness, though I could not understand a word that he said. I took care, however, in Arabic, to charge him and the Wallasmah with incivility, and want of hospitality, for detaining me so long in Farree against my will, and also with having, like a thief, stolen the note I had sent to Ankobar. As we had been now joined by a man named Brekka, who understood what I said, he interpreted for us, and afforded the misselannee an opportunity in reply, of throwing the whole blame

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upon the Wallasmah, whose servant he was, at the same time begging me to return with him, for which purpose, and for my accommodation, he had brought my mule along with him. I positively refused, on the plea, that their King had promised mine, that Englishmen were to travel unmolested through the country, alluding to the treaty, and that, accordingly, if they now used force to take me back to Farree, it would bring the matter to an issue, and my people would then see the real value of the word of Sahale Selassee. Seeing I was determined not to return with them they agreed to compromise the matter, upon my promising to remain at Garcia Mulloo, and not attempt to proceed farther towards Ankobar, until the King's pleasure respecting me should be known. This I was induced to do by the misselannee's pacific appeal that I would not do anything which would occasion him to be imprisoned, and all his property confiscated.

Our interpreter, Brekka, was a scamp of a renegado, who had been a Christian, but was converted to the Islam faith, by the promise of a situation under the Wallasmah, whose district, the province of Efat, is inhabited chiefly by Mahomedans. The contiguity of the two faiths among a people of one origin, affords an interesting opportunity of examining the first effect of differences in religious belief, and which leads, in the course of time, to the division of one family of man into two distinct nations, differing in

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customs, pursuits, and even, after a lapse of time, in physical features.

The same dispersing operation of opinion, but more advanced, is to be observed in the separation, at the present day, of the Dankalli and Soumaulee tribes, and to any zealous student of the science of all sciences, humanity, or the natural history of man, it is indispensably necessary that he should visit the countries of Abyssinia, of Sennaar, and Adal, where he will find collected, as at a centre, the originals of all the different varieties into which physiologists have divided the human race; and where, at this moment, the principal causes of the great moral change in the condition of man, consequent upon the flood, may be observed in full operation, and producing the same effects of dispersion. Christian civilization, which points to a future union, is the antagonizing principle to the opinion disturbing one, which, I believe, alone separates and divides mankind; and I could wish to see, here, in intertropical Africa, a Mission of enlightened ministers of the Gospel, whose object should be simply to spread the easily understood doctrine of one God, and that love and truth are the redeeming principles in the character of man, to restore him to that state of excellence from which he has fallen.

It being arranged I should stay at Garcia Mulloo, a supply of bread and beer was ordered by the misselanee, who had been sent for to see after this duty; the same officer of the town of

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Farree, returning there with his party, taking my mule along with them, and leaving Brekka and another man to keep me company, as was said, but in fact, to keep guard over me. A disjointed conversation with the former served to amuse me during the rest of the day. He gave me some information respecting the Embassy, and of the dislike entertained by Sahale Selassee to the English; which surprised me considerably, nor would I at first believe it, but ascribed the statement to the ill feeling and jealousy with which the visit of our Political Mission to the Court of Shoa, was viewed by the Mahomedans of Efat.

In the afternoon, Brekka walked down to Farree, and when he returned, told me he had seen a letter for me, and a messenger from Ankobar, and that if I wished to see them I must go to that town. I did not hesitate a moment, but was now as anxious to be off, as I was before obstinately bent upon remaining. The news of Brekka being confirmed by the arrival of a messenger from the Wallasmah, with the same information, I started immediately. I conceived that the not sending the letter to Garcia Mulloo, was perhaps intended as a kind of punishment for my breaking prison in the morning.

In about an hour and a-half, we were again crossing the little stream which flows at the base of the hill on which Farree stands; and I was soon seated in my old quarters, whilst Brekka went

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to obtain for me the expected note. When he returned, he brought me an order to go to the Wallasmah myself, as he wanted to see me; and who occupied a house upon one of the little eminences opposite to mine. I was not long in presenting myself in obedience to this summons, and found that gentleman sitting upon a large oxskin spread upon the ground, paring his toe nails with an old pocket knife. As I came round the low stone fence against which he leaned, he cast his eyes upon me, and growled a very sinister kind of salutation, asking me in broken Arabic how I did. I now requested him to give me the letter from Ankobar, but he only shook his head. I asked to see the messenger, and with a chuckle of triumphant cunning, he pointed with the open knife to the fastened door of an outhouse, an action which I readily interpreted to mean, "He is there, in prison." I did not say a word more, but walked away in high dudgeon, overturning a rude Abyssinian who, with spear and shield pushed against me, as if to prevent my exit when I made my way out through a little wicket in the stick enclosure that surrounded the house.

The worst of my situation was, that I had no friends near, all the Hy Soumaulee and Tajourah people being according to custom, obliged to locate themselves during their stay in Shoa, in a little town called Channo, situated about two miles to the north-east of Farree, where they are

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compelled to leave their shields and spears when they go farther into the interior of the country. I had to send for any of these to come to me, but either it was too late in the day, being after sunset, or orders had been issued to the contrary, for I could induce no one to take a message from me either to Ohmed Medina or Carmel Ibrahim. I was obliged, therefore, to remain quiet for the night, being determined, however, on the morrow to escape into the Adal country, and carry the news back, which otherwise might be a long time in reaching Aden, of the actual condition of things in Shoa; where, instead of the English being courted and caressed, as was believed to be the case when I was in Tajourah, they were, in fact, the objects of the most jealous suspicion, and subjected to the most tyrannical surveillance, if not actually in prison.

The early part of the morning of the 26th of May was occupied in projecting the plan of my escape with Carmel Ibrahim and Adam Burrah, the latter of whom having assisted Lieut. Barker in getting through the Adal country after that gentleman had left the Hurrah Kafilah, I could the more confidently rely upon, although I had not the least doubt of the fidelity or trustworthiness of the former. These two had come with Allee the First to laugh with me at my attempt of getting to Ankobar the day before, and endeavoured to soothe and interest me, as they thought, by showing how they would disembowel the old fat Wallasmah

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if they had him in their country. My proposal to go back was met with their decided approbation. It was accordingly arranged that Carmel and Adam should accompany me in the evening, whilst the rest of the escort were to remain, and during the night manage to steal my mule, and as many more as they could, and join us at the little Wahama town Dophan, beyond which they knew very well no attempt would be made to pursue us.

I was in the act of making a few cartridges for my anticipated return journey, when I heard a loud cry of "Commander, Commander," an English word, by which the Abyssinians had been taught to designate the head of the Mission. Two or three of the inhabitants of Farree came also in a great hurry to call me out of the house, and tell me that some Gypt or other was approaching. I was equally eager, and even ran in a most undignified manner to meet this messenger of light, who, mounted on a mule, now appeared upon the summit or crest of the road before it descends into the little hollow where stands the market-place. There was a great air of civilization about him. He wore a broad-brimmed hat, somewhat like my own, covered with white cotton cloth, a sailor's large pea-jacket belted round his waist, an old pair of grey check trowsers, and came with a sober steady pace along the narrow path.

I met him as he dismounted beneath the few mimosa-trees, and after a hearty shake of the hand,

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invited him to my *hotel.* He then introduced himself as Mr. R. Scott, the surveying draughtsman attached to the Mission.

His first explanation was the cause of his non-arrival sooner, which was owing to the utter ignorance of my arrival on the part of Captain Harris, the chief of the Embassy, until the night but one before, when the King had forwarded by one of his pages two notes, which I had endeavoured to send to him, the last one dated from Dinnomalee. The other was the one which had been sent by Esau Ibrahim, who, it will be remembered, was despatched from Mullu, on the other side of the Hawash, with a note to Ankobar, informing Captain Harris of my being on the road with stores. Both these letters had been intercepted and detained, until public rumour spreading, the King could not have kept the Embassy much longer ignorant of my being in the country; and he therefore made a virtue of necessity, and sent the letters before they were demanded.

An answer had been sent to me by Capt. Harris the day before by the messenger now in prison, confined by the Wallasmah for having brought a letter for me, after the King had issued orders that all correspondence between the English already in the country and those arriving should be prevented. Mr. Scott was not at all surprised when I informed him of the circumstance, though I certainly considered such a proceeding to be very

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much at variance with the conditions and stipulations I was given to understand were contained in the commercial treaty. I could not help remarking this, and Mr. Scott then candidly admitted the King did not know the character or purport of the paper he had signed; and had only been made aware of the new responsibilities he had incurred, by a sharply worded expostulatory letter, written by Mr. Krapf, in accordance to the dictation of Captain Harris, on an occasion subsequently to the signing of the treaty, when despatches and letters coming up from the coast were intercepted and detained for some time by the orders of the King. Singularly enough, this information was corroborated by Ohmed Medina, who told me that my letter from Dinnomalee had not been carried to Captain Harris, but to the King, who wanted to find out whether the English were his friends or not, and was trying my disposition and that of the Commander (Captain Harris) by this harsh treatment of me; a kind of experiment, in fact, to see what would be borne by us, and how far he had limited his authority by attaching his signature to the treaty. Any idea of granting public benefit, at the expense of his prerogative was never entertained for a moment, the intentions of the King being limited to shewing personal favour alone, which he is ever ready to concede even now to English travellers, much as he complains of the conduct of the Mission in Shoa as regards their

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political misdoings; more especially of the great insult offered to him by the unfortunate letter before alluded to, and which was worded so unguardedly, that the King, on receiving it, might well, considering his great regard for Mr. Krapf previously, turn to him and say, in a tone that implied more of sorrow than of anger, "Did you write that, my father?"

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CHAPTER III.

Staying at Farree with Mr. Scott.—Both placed under parole.—Description of the houses of Farree.—Of the flour mill.—Some remarks upon the origin of the Amhara.—Dr. Prichard upon identity of the Amhara with the Antomali of Herodotus.—Physical characters of the people.—Interview with the Wallasmah.—Saltpetre rock.—Province of Efat.—Take leave of Escort.—Tyrannical conduct of the Wallasmah.

May 26, 1842.—After Mr. Scott joined me at Farree, I considered that all my troubles were at an end, although I had still to go above fifty miles before I could meet the members of the British Political Mission who had accompanied the King to his residence at Angolahlah, the most western town of his dominions. An establishment was still kept up at Ankobar, situated about one third of the way between Farree and Angolahlah, at the head of which was the naturalist attached to the Mission, Dr. Roth, with whom was Mr. Bernatz, the artist, and there also Mr. Scott was stationed. Captain Harris the Ambassador, Captain Graham, the second in command, and Mr. Assistant-Surgeon Kirk, lived at Angolahlah, where I now expected to be permitted to go by my gaoler the Wallasmah.

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I found, however, I was reckoning without my host, for a new difficulty had arisen, from the circumstance of Mr. Scott having come down to Farree without the permission of Walda-anna, the Governor of Ankobar. He was accordingly given to understand that he must consider himself a prisoner with me until the pleasure of the negoos should be known as to our disposal. It was in vain we expostulated with our surly gaoler; we were to be opposed by force if we attempted to leave Farree, and other sentinels were charged with the care of us. Something we did effect, and that was the liberation of the messenger who was detected bringing me a letter the day before, for as soon as this request was made to the Wallasmah it was at once acceded to, and the man was ordered to be set at liberty. Taking this as an evidence of some relaxation of the harsh treatment with which we had been treated, we sat sometime chatting with the old gentleman, and I hinted my intention of making him some present if he would honour me so far as to accept of my poor gifts. When we got up from the ground where we had been sitting, the Wallasmah directed his son, a fine young man about three or four and twenty years old, to accompany us to our residence; a sufficient intimation of his being graciously disposed, without the broad hint given by one of his followers, who whispered into the ears of Mr. Scott, "Give your *memolagee* to that man." Our imprisoned servant not making

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his appearance before we left the Wallasmah, we asked where he was, and were surprised to hear that he had left Farree for Angolahlah without seeing us, but which we supposed he had been obliged to do, so that there should be no chance of our slipping a note into his hands for our friends in that town.

We returned to our house, and for the rest of the day amused ourselves with hearing and telling whatever most interested us, whether of home or foreign news. I must observe that a present of three pieces of calico and a pound of gunpowder was made to the Wallasmah, who sent us back his compliments, and that he was highly delighted with the present, but would be obliged for a little more gunpowder.

Mr. Scott and I were entertained and taken care of for four days in Farree, much to our discomfort and vexation. Fortunately this gentleman had brought with him two native servants, who made themselves useful by marketing and cooking during the term of our confinement, so we suffered nothing from want of food. We could also walk about the straggling town on pledging our word that we would not attempt to escape, although our parole was not deemed sufficient, for, like Buonaparte at St. Helena, two sentinels, on such excursions, always followed at a certain distance in our rear.

Many of the houses in Farree, instead of being

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the usual circle of closely placed sticks, some five feet high and surmounted by a high conical straw roof, are partial excavations in the soft trachytic stone, so as to leave a back and sides of natural rock. Over this is laid a flat roof, consisting of untrimmed rafters covered by a thick layer of brushwood, upon which is placed a layer of earth some inches in thickness, well stamped down with the feet. A front of wattled sticks, in which the entrance is made, completes the house, and in one such as this was I lodged during my stay in this town.

The internal arrangements were equally simple. A raised platform of stones and clay, about two feet high, occupied one half of the single apartment, and upon one end of this, reaching to the roof, stood a huge butt-like basket, smoothly plastered over inside and out with clay. This was the family granary, in which was preserved the teff seed, or wheat, from the depredations of the numerous mice that are a thorough pest in Abyssinia. In a corner below, stood side by side two of the peculiar handmills used in this country, each consisting of a large flat stone of cellular lava, two feet long and one foot broad, raised upon a rude pedestal of stones and mud, about one foot and a half from the ground. The rough surface of this stone sloped gradually down from behind forwards into a basin-like cavity, into which the flour falls as it is ground. A second stone, grasped

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in the hand of the woman who grinds, weighs about three pounds, beneath which, as it is moved up and down the inclined plane of the under millstone, the grain is crushed, and gradually converted into a coarse flour.

This is the same kind of mill that was used by the ancient Egyptians, and is represented in the excellent work upon those people, recently written by Sir G. Wilkinson, although he describes it as being used for fulling clothes, having mistaken, I suppose, the flour represented as falling into the cup-like recipient for a stream of water. I observe, also, in another plate in the same work, a representation of this mill, but without any allusion to its real purposes. Moses, in the fifth verse of the eleventh chapter of Exodus, describes exactly the character of the occupation, and the instrument, where he speaks "of the maid-servant that is behind the mill," for women are only employed on this duty, and they always stand in the rear, leaning forward over their work. Very few houses, those only of the poorest people, have but one mill; generally two or more stand side by side in a row, and the number is always mentioned when the idea is wished to be conveyed of the large dependent retinue that the master of the house feeds.

A few large jars containing water, or ale, ranged along one side of the house, and a shield hung from the projecting end of one of the sticks that formed the front, were the only articles that

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occupied prominent positions as furniture in my residence. Three or four "maceroitsh," or earthenware pots for cooking, generally lay upset in the white wood ashes contained in the large circular hearth that occupied a portion of the floor opposite to the mills; and some of the necessary but small instruments for clearing or spinning cotton were placed when not being used upon a skin bag, in which a quantity of that useful material was contained.

I was very much struck with the extreme contrasts that could be drawn between the inhabitants of Farree and the Dankalli Bedouins. The large and portly forms of the former, their apparent love of quiet, the affection they evinced for their children, and that of the children for their parents, were all points characteristic of these great differences. The physiognomy of the two people exhibited equally varying features, and as the men of Farree are a good type of the real Amhara population, I shall endeavour to give an idea of the form of the countenance and the head peculiar to this family of man, by a description drawn from my first observations in that town, where the people have less admixture of Galla blood, than the inhabitants of the table land of Shoa above and beyond them.

This will be preceded, however, by some necessary, and, I believe, novel information respecting the origin of the Amhara, which I became acquainted with during my residence in

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Shoa, and which has been singularly confirmed by a comparison of the reports and prejudices I noted down while in that country, with recorded circumstances of the earlier history of Egypt, and of other powerful empires that once existed along the course of the Nile.

Amhara, which word is at present only used to designate the Christian population of Abyssinia, was, previous to the introduction of the Mahomedan religion, the descriptive appellation of an extensive red people, who principally occupied the eastern border of the Abyssinian table land, from the latitude of Massoah in the north to that of lake Zui in the south. To the west of these, and occupying the portion of the table land in that direction, lived a people decidedly different in their complexion, their features, their language, their religion, and their customs. These were the Gongas, or Agows, who I believe to have been the original possessors of the whole plateau, until a period remarkable in history, when the Emperor of Meroë or Ethiopia located upon a portion of their country, those disaffected soldiers of Psammeticus who had sought an asylum in his kingdom. Were I not convinced that the Amhara population of Abyssinia, at the present day, can be physically demonstrated to be the descendants of these fugitives from Egypt, I would not venture to advance such an innovation upon the generally received opinion, that the Amhara are aborigines of the country they now inhabit.

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Under the term Abyssins, Dr. Prichard, in his invaluable work upon the natural history of man, includes all the different nations that now inhabit the lofty plain of Abisha or Abyssinia. Of one of these nations, the Amhara, he remarks, "So striking is the resemblance between the modern Abyssinians and the Hebrews of old, that we can hardly look upon them but as branches of one nation, and if we had not convincing evidence to the contrary, and knew not for certain that the Abramidæ originated in Chaldæa, and to the northward and eastward of Palestine, we might frame a very probable hypothesis, which would bring them down as a band of wandering shepherds from the mountains of Habesh, and identify them with the pastor kings, who, according to Manetho, multiplied their bands in the land of the Pharaohs, and being, after some centuries, expelled thence by the will of the gods, sought refuge in Judea, and built the walls of Jerusalem. Such an hypothesis would explain the existence of an almost Israelitish people, and the preservation of a language so nearly approaching to the Hebrew in intertropical Africa." The learned ethnologist goes on to observe—"It is certainly untrue; and we find no other easy explanation of the facts which the history of Abyssinia presents, and particularly of the early extension of the Jewish religion and customs through that country, for the legend which makes the royal house of

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Menilek descend from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, is as idle a story as ever monks invented to abuse the reverent ignorance of their lay brethren."

Herodotus, and other ancient historians and geographers, have recorded the migration of a vast body of discontented native soldiers from Egypt, in the time of Psammeticus. These, we are told, to the number of 240,000, retired to the country of Ethiopia, where they were kindly received by the Emperor. They assisted him in his wars, and in return were apportioned, as a residence, some country on the confines of Ethiopia, from which they were to drive a rebellious people to make room for themselves. Herodotus places this country "upon the Nile, at about the same distance beyond Meroë as this last is from Elephantine, or fifty days' journey;" and he also adds, that "the Antomali (deserters) are known by the name of Asmach, which, being translated, signifies 'standing on the left hand' of the King." It is a most remarkable circumstance that the reason or origin of the name of the country of Gurague, literally "on the left side," has long been a question of interest with every Abyssinian traveller, but none have given any satisfactory explanation for what reason this particular, and evidently significant, name was first applied. The situation of the Amhara with respect to the Abi or Bruce's Nile at once accounts for the designation, as they live upon the left hand of the stream as it flows south

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from lake Dembea, whilst that portion of this people still retaining their ancient name and purity of descent, the present Gurague occupy a country similarly situated with respect to the river Zebbee, or Azzabi, or Assabinus, the Ethiopian Jupiter. Abi and Abiah, other names for branches of the Nile in Abyssinia, are expressive of *father* or *king*, evidently from having been, at a former period, the chief objects of worship by the people inhabiting their banks. "Asmach," and "Gurague," bear, therefore, the same interpretation, "to the left of the king," and none other can explain the circumstance of the latter name being given to the Amhara. It appears, however to have been bestowed in contra-distinction to the "Gongas," or "Kongue," a people who originally occupied the right banks solely of the Abi and Abiah.

This singular correspondence between "Asmach" of the Grecian historian, and "Gurague" of modern travellers, would be alone, perhaps, inconclusive evidence that these terms apply to the same people or country, but some additional evidence may be drawn from the account which Pliny gives of these Egyptian fugitives. On the authority of Aristocreon, he states, that "Seventeen days from Meroë is Esar, a city of those Egyptians who fled from Psammeticus, and entered the service of the monarch of that country, and in return received a considerable tract of territory upon the confines, from which the Ethiopian

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prince ordered them to expel a tribe of people, at that time in rebellion against him, and this migration of the Egyptian troops, introducing the arts and manners of a refined nation, had a very sensible effect in civilizing the Ethiopians." The most interesting particulars we gather from this information, is the name of the city, or, as I presume, the chief seat of these fugitives, Esar.

By a singular coincidence in the Old Testament, we are told that Esau is Edom, and although I am not going to infer from this alone, any connexion between that patriarch and the Ethiopian city, Esar, yet the philological analogy between the scriptural proper names, curiously enough, also exists between those of profane history; for the Esar and Amhara of our subject, express the very same idea as Esau and Edom, which by all Biblical commentators, is allowed to be the colour red. "And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau." (Genesis xxv. 25.)

In the present Dankalli language, and I think also, in that of ancient Meroë, Assar signifies red. In the Persian, I am given to understand that the planet Mars is called Azer, from its characteristic colour, a circumstance of significant import when it is considered that the word Calla, from which is derived Galla, "Ab" the root of Abi, and "Nil," from which comes Nile, with others I have yet to speak of, as designations of

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places in Abyssinia, are all referable to the same language. To return, however, to Esar, and its connexion with the colour red, for it is the same with Esau, and that it is the same as Edom in Hebrew, I advance the testimony of Dr. Stukeley, who, speaking of the Red Sea, remarks, "That sea had its name from Erythras, as the Greeks and the same Pliny write; who is Edom, or Esau, brother of Jacob. The words are synonymous, signifying red."* Amhara, also bears the same interpretation in Amharic, and although it has another meaning, that of beautiful, this is only because of the national taste directing the name of the favourite complexion among them, to be employed as the term for beauty itself. The Dankalli slave-merchant well understands this, for a light-red Abyssinian girl is the Circassian of oriental harems. In Arabia, where the original word still conveys the more common idea, we find "'hamah" employed to express the colour red.

In this manner, I connect the "Asmach" of Herodotus, with Gurague of modern travellers, and the Esar of Pliny, with the Amhara of the present day, and from these two mutually corroborating correspondencies, the identity of the modern Abyssinians of Dr. Prichard with the Automali of Herodotus may perhaps be deduced, and the difficulty of accounting for a Hebrew people, situated on the Abyssinian plateau only requires

* Dr. Stukeley. "Stonehenge, a British Temple," page 53.

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proof to be advanced that the revolted soldiers of Psammeticus were of the same family of man as the fugitive Israelites who sought a refuge, under nearly similar circumstances, in Syria, and built the walls of Jerusalem; and as their languages are nearly the same, as also their manners, customs, and ancient religion, previous to the introduction of Christianity, it will not, perhaps, be difficult to adduce such evidence. For my part, I am inclined to believe in this national relationship, because it is partly confirmed by the received account of the brothers, Esau and Jacob, contained in the book of Genesis, and the connexion between the two patriarchs, and the country of Egypt, will perhaps receive some illustration from the opinion I have ventured to advance upon the subject. In the elder brother, Esau, I perceive the father of the royal shepherds, and among the list of the dukes, his descendants may be found, perhaps the pastor kings who held for some time the sovereign power in Egypt.

The connexion also of the name Esau, or Esar, with the profession of soldiers, is evident, for in oriental mythology it is identified with the god Mars; whilst on the other hand, the word *Israel*, in Hebrew, I believe, as in Amharic has an immediate reference to *labour*, as the name Jacob has also to the *heel*, which coincides very singularly with the idea prevalent in India, that the labouring class have all sprung from the foot of Brahmah. It

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would be very interesting, if future discoveries in hieroglyphics, or other cotemporary histories, which, I believe, do exist in central Africa, should prove that the appearance of the Jews as a family of man, under the patriarch Abraham, marks the disruption of an African community of castes, where the Priest class, excited by the ambition of a Psammeticus, should determine upon the expulsion of the soldiers, who thereupon fled to Ethiopia; and, also, that after a tyrannical and cruel oppression should ultimately occasion the flight of the workmen, or Israelites, into Palestine. I leave the question, however, now, to more profound ethnologists, and shall conclude this, I am afraid, very uninteresting subject, with a short but necessary description of the features and physical characteristics of the present Amhara population of Abyssinia.

In the British Museum are many Egyptian statues that possess exactly the features of the genuine Amhara race. One more, especially of a woman in the lower saloon marked 16, I will particularize, to enable those who have the opportunity of examining these relics of an extinct nation to form a proper idea of the physiognomy of the people I am speaking of.

Their general complexion cannot be better described by reference to a familiar object than comparing it with that of red unpolished copper. Their skin is soft and delicate; the general stature is below the middle height of Europeans. Their

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forms are not fully developed until they have arrived at the same years of puberty as ourselves; and it is very uncommon for women under seventeen to bear children. The features of the women conform to a general characteristic type, and less variations from this are observed among them than in the men. This observation extends to other races besides the Amhara, for I have invariably found more consistency of countenance, more nationality preserved in the features of females than in the males of the many different people I have met with in my travels in Abyssinia.

The Amhara face is ovate, having a considerably greater expression of breadth in the upper than in the lower part. The scalp in front encroaches upon the forehead, making its length disproportionate to its height, and, in consequence, it appears exceedingly low. The eyes are long, but rather full, and the separation of the eyelids longitudinal, as in Europeans. Their cheeks are high, yet finely rounded, and sometimes, with the long forehead, giving to the countenance a nearly triangular form. The nose straight and well-formed, with a small and beautiful mouth, a finely-curved edge gradually rising from the commissure to the fulness of a most inviting pair of lips. A voluptuous fulness, in fact, pervades the whole countenance; a something more than muscular fibre, yet not exactly fat, giving a healthy fleshiness, that reminds you of the chubbiness of children; and I expect the fascinating

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expression so generally ascribed to Abyssinian beauties by all orientals is owing to the idea of innocence and simplicity, that inseparably connects itself with this infantile character of face. The hair is soft and long; it is neither woolly, like the negro, nor is it the strong, coarse, straight hair of the Gongas, or yellow inhabitants of the right bank of the Abi and Abiah branches of the Azzabi, or red Nile.

I saw few or no cases of distortion among the families I met with in Efat, and my impression is that they but rarely occur, the natural and simple lives of the people conducing to easy parturition and a healthy offspring. The Amhara, however, in their most unchanged condition in Guragué, and the neighbouring Christian states, have yet to be visited. The inhabitants of these countries may exhibit characteristic traits that I have had no opportunities of observing, for those I met with were the most favourable specimens of the imported slaves, or their immediate descendants, who were married to Mahomedans of Efat.

Individuals possessing what I believe to have been the characteristic features of the genuine Amharic countenance are but seldom seen on the high land of Shoa, although it might naturally be expected that their situation would favour a lighter complexion than the dark-brown Shoans exhibit. This is to be attributed to the very recent period that their Galla ancestorial relations intruded themselves into this former Amhara district, as Abyssinian history records that the first appearance of these

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invaders from the low plains of Adal occurred no later than the year 1537.

From the 27th to the 31st of May, Mr. Scott and I remained in easy durance at Farree. We were frequently summoned to the presence of the Wallasmah, whom we would amuse by firing off my gun, or teaching his son, a boy about fourteen years old, to let off percussion caps without shutting his eyes. The dreadful experiment would never be attempted by papa, but he wonderfully enjoyed the bright promise of his hopeful progeny, the child of his old age, who, on the other hand, annoyed us not a little by the unsatisfied pertness with which he demanded to be so indulged.

Day after day were we most solemnly promised that we should start upon the morrow, but without any intention of being permitted to do so, beyond the accident occurring of our being sent for by the King. Perhaps our importunity excited a desire to gratify us, and what they wished for our sake the kind-hearted people of Farree asserted would be, because of the great probability that the messenger who had been sent to the King to receive his commands, would return sooner than he did.

I am not going to acquit the Wallasmah on this plea, for his want of courtesy towards us; for from some incomprehensible antipathy, he would, had he dared, have placed us in irons, and even on occasions of our visiting him, when we endeavoured to do every thing we could to please him, a surly smile was the only return for some little gratification we might

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afford to his boy. His people frequently made excuses for the conduct of their chief, by stating that he either had been drinking, or else that he had not; so, drunk or sober, it seemed quite natural to them that the old fellow should be in a continual ill-humour from some undefined connexion with strong drink.

I took care to promise him another present on the occasion of our leaving Farree, as I conceived that it might be some expectation of the sort that was operating to cause our tiresome detention. I was wrong in this, for it was not his pleasure, but the King's, his master, that we should be kept at Farree, although he tried to make us believe it was his own, and assuming an authority that did not belong to him, made our confinement more irksome than it needed to have been, on purpose to evince his power. With our sentinels behind us, however, we could wander all over the hill of Farree, and we accordingly amused ourselves by endeavouring to extend our information upon the various subjects of novel interest with which we were surrounded.

One observation I cannot do better than to insert here, respecting the rocks and soil of Farree, which abound with the nitrate of potass, the bald face of the former, in many places, being hollowed into deep grooves by the constant attrition of the tongues of the numerous flocks and herds, which seem to be as fond of this salt as the same animals are of common table salt in other countries; a

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circumstance that is well shown in those saline resorts of deer and buffaloes, called the "licks" of North America. The geological structure of the hills in this neighbourhood is a finely-grained trachytic rock; grey, save where the intrusion of narrow dykes of some blacker rocks, a few feet in thickness, and evidently heated on their first appearance, has changed the general colour to a deep red, which gradually recovers its natural hue at the distance of some yards on either side the dyke. This rock contains a considerable quantity of decomposing felt-spar, supplying the potass, and, I presume, deriving from the atmosphere, and the moisture it contains, the other necessary elements to form the thick efflorescence of saltpetre that covers in some places the surface of the rock.

The religion of Farree is exclusively Mahomedan, as is also that of more than three-fourths of the towns and villages of the province of Efat, all of which are under the hereditary viceregal Wallasmah, who boasts a descent from the famous Mahomed Grahnè, the Adal conqueror of many portions of the ancient Abyssinian empire, in the sixteenth century. Efat forms a portion of the valley country, or Argobbah, which extends from the edge of the table land of Shoa to the Hawash, that flows along the base of this slope, from the south towards the north. The northern boundary of Efat is the river Robee, the southern one being the Kabani; both of them flow into the Hawash.

Late in the afternoon of the 30th of May, the

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messenger returned from Angolahlah, with orders from the King that I should be allowed to proceed thither, and that the stores should be conveyed to his presence. Considerable bustle and confusion seemed thereupon to take possession of the previously quiet town. Vociferous proclamations were from time to time issued by the misselannee in person, standing upon the stone enclosure in the centre of the market-place. Numerous informants, willing to be the first bearers of good news, hurried to acquaint us with the cause of all the stir, and to assure us that we were to start in the morning; for that the requisite permission had arrived from the King, and the Wallasmah had directed our mules to be brought in from the grazing ground. The proclamations of the misselannee were to the effect that all persons owing suit and service to the Wallasmah, on account of land held of him, must present themselves; and either personally, or by their slaves, convey the boxes and other packages as far as Aliu Amba, on the road to Angolahlah, from which town a relief party would then take the duty of carrying them the remaining distance.

From the character of the road, badly constructed and in wretched condition, all the packages had to be conveyed up the long ascent to Shoa upon the shoulders of men. Besides, the only beasts of burden, except an occasional worn-out mule or horse, employed by the Abyssinians, are asses, and these were found to be unequal to the carriage of large angular-formed boxes, which, in

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fact, could not have been properly secured upon the backs of these little animals.

In the evening the Hy Soumaulee came to bid me good-bye, objecting to the cold of Angolahlah, when I asked them if they did not intend to visit me there. They shuddered at the thought of it, and all business transactions, as regarded payment for their services, were referred to the agency of the two heads of the Kafilah, Ohmed Mahomed and Ebin Izaac, who were obliged, of course, to present themselves to the Negoos Sahale Selassee, and to the British ambassador.

I saw them depart with feelings of regret that I had no means in my power to reward the services of these faithful, and I will add, attached Bedouins; beyond bearing testimony to the great capabilities of their people, who are possessed certainly of the greatest virtues and of the noblest attributes of our nature, if judged by the standard of human excellence contained in the Iliad or Æneid, the heroes of which I would undertake to match with many Dankalli warriors of the present day. During my stay in this town, it was customary for them to come from Channo, where they were quartered, to sit with me an hour or so in the cool of the morning or the evening. On these occasions their appearance always gave me pleasure, bursting into sight all at once as they chased each other over the crest of the hill, their dark forms for a moment boldly relieved upon the bright sky behind them; down they would come

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full speed along the tortuous, but easy sloping descent across the market-place and up the low bank to my residence, shouting as they came, "Ahkeem, ahkeem," to give me notice of their approach. On entering, four or five of them, with their usual impetuosity, would extend their hands for the sliding contact with the palm of mine, at the same time calling out together the oft-repeated expression, "Negarsee," or "Myhisee," which respectively characterizes the evening or morning salutation.

It was after sunset of the last day we were at Farree, before the Wallasmah sent for us to communicate the pleasure of the King, or Negoos, as I shall call him for the future. We were ordered to proceed to Angolahlah; and whilst we were talking, our mules were brought up and delivered over to Mr. Scott's servants, that we might start as early as we pleased the next morning. The Wallasmah also was ordered to attend at Angolahlah, which was one reason of his having withheld the information of our departure from us until the last moment. The summons which he was obliged to obey did not exactly accord with his wishes, and a two days' journey for an old man of sixty years of age, we admitted was a sufficient reason for the increased ill-temper with which he received the causers of so much trouble when we visited him on the last occasion. I took with me another pound of gunpowder and some more coloured cotton cloth; and these had the good

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effect of restoring him to perfect good humour: indeed, to show his regard for us, much to our surprise, he directed some of his attendants to liberate the unfortunate messenger who had been detected bringing me a letter the day before Mr. Scott's arrival, and who, we conceived, had returned to Ankobar, according as had been stated on one of our first visits by the Wallasmah himself. Instead of this being the fact, we now found that the poor fellow had been the whole time confined in his thatched lock-up, and supplied with a scanty fare of the worst kind of bread and water. I felt very sorry for him when he came staggering out of prison, with blood-shot eyes and squalid look; and it was with feelings of pity rather than of contempt, that I witnessed the broken spirited man, with shoulders bare, and with the most abject submission, stoop and kiss the earth at the feet of his unjust and tyrannical oppressor. The Wallasmah, with the penetrating glance of suspicious cunning, read in my countenance the detestation I felt at such unwarrantable conduct on his part, and muttered in excuse, something about the man having been "one of Krapf's servants," as if he considered that quite a sufficient pretext for the harshest treatment. The Mahomedans of Efat fully believe, that the exhortations of that zealous missionary alone prevented the Negoos from changing his religion; as, shortly before his arrival in Shoa, a Koran and a mollum to expound it to the Christian monarch, had been sent for to the palace.

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Mr. Scott and I were so astonished at seeing the man whom we thought to be far distant, that we could not say anything. It would have been a great relief to my indignation if I could have told my thoughts to the old scoundrel, but this being out of the question, I walked away as quickly as possible from his presence, followed by Mr. Scott and our servants; and I do hope that our abrupt and unceremonious departure annoyed him a little, and thus retaliated in some measure for his contempt of, and disrespect towards us.

The politic Sahale Selassee, Negoos of Shoa, is well aware of the character of the Wallasmah, and the value of having such an imbecile ruling over the restless Mahomedan population of his kingdom. A governor, indeed, of whom he may truly say, as our Charles the Second did of himself and of his brother the Duke of York, "That his subjects would never kill him to make the other King."

The inhabitants of Efat, much as they dislike the opprobrious position of living under a Christian monarch, never entertain an idea of revolting from the Negoos to place themselves under the power of that vindictive drunkard the Wallasmah Mahomed; whose only claim to their respect is his religion and his descent from the hero of modern Abyssinian history, Mahomed Grahnè, of whose extensive kingdom of Adal this little province of Efat, not so large as Middlesex, is all that has remained to his family, and even that is now a portion of the Christian state of Shoa.

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CHAPTER IV.

Leave Farree for Ankobar.—Description of the road.—Aliu Amba.—Road to Ankobar.—Incidents of the journey.—Vale of the Dinkee river.—Valley of the Airahra.—Effect of denudation.—Ankobar.—British Residency.—Start for Angolahlah.—Ascent of the Tchakkah.—Road to Angolahlah.—The town of Angolahlah.—Meet superior officers of Mission.

May 31*st.*—Long before the sun had appeared upon the horizon our mules were saddled and bridled; the hotel bill for Mr. Scott and myself duly discharged, by a present of two dollars to the owner of the house where we had been entertained and imprisoned; farewells were exchanged for the last time with some of my Kafilah friends, and of my escort; and we were off on our journey to Angolahlah, just as the distant elevated hills near Ankobar, and the ridge or line of the table land of Shoa beyond these, were brightly gilded by the first rays of the rising luminary. Steadily we descended the loose stony declivity of the hill of Farree, then clattered more briskly along a winding road that, taking us round the base of a much higher eminence, shut us out entirely from the sight of the white tobed townspeople, who sat

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along the edges of their own cliffs to watch our progress so far on our journey.

We now descended a bank of about four feet high into the bed of the stream, by whose denuding agency the rocky flanks of the adjoining hills had been laid bare. Trees of irregular height, and of very various foliage, bordered the broad pebbly channel, along which a gently rippling brook meandered, its course opposed to ours as it flowed to join the Hawash. Sometimes it scoured a little ledge of gravel, or fell over and among high boulders, the evidences of its power in the time of its fullest might, during the heavy rains of July and August; when its swollen volume, yellow with suspended mud, rushes along its then pent-up bounds, bearing before it rocks, uprooted trees, and the rotting debris of jowarhee, beans, or teff, from the upland fields which it has devastated in its course.

We rode for some time along the bed of the stream, following its serpentine channel, until we turned upon its right bank, and began to ascend a long gradual slope, which having overcome, only led us to a descent equally irksome, both to riders and mules, from its continued inclination downwards. At its base we crossed another stream, and then began to climb another height, and then came again the equally tiresome descent on the opposite side. And thus we proceeded for at least four hours, alternate hill and stream in regular

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succession, until we arrived at Aliu Amba; a village perched upon a flat-topped isolated rock that, nearly at right angles with the road, juts across the upper end of a pretty little valley, along which we had been coming for the last half hour.

When we had managed to scramble over a series of irregular and quite naturally disposed stone steps, and had gained the level summit of this ridge, I turned to look in the direction from whence we had come, and contemplated it with great satisfaction; congratulating myself at having got two-thirds of the heavy business over of ascending the long flight of hill steps which, gradually increasing in elevation, form a kind of giant staircase from our starting place at Farree to the table land of Shoa.

At Aliu Amba we met numbers of Christian Abyssinians, and were taken to the house of the Governor, also a Christian, but who was absent in attendance upon the King. Every civility was paid to us, and numerous were the inquiries made after Lieut. Barker, who, it appears, had taken up his residence in this town some months previous to his return journey. I was glad to be able to say that I had had a personal interview with him, for I could see, that to be the "Woodage Kapitan," friend of the Captain, as he was called in Shoa, was a great recommendation; and although a lengthened levee, with a crowd of people whose language you cannot understand, is a terrible bore,

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still smiling faces, and a friendly welcome, in a strange country, from whatever cause, does the traveller's heart good, and encourages him to proceed on his undertaking.

We halted for nearly two hours at Aliu Amba, not being able to get away before, as a sheep had been killed, and our servants were determined to take advantage of the hospitality of the townspeople. When their hunger was satisfied, they brought us our mules, for which we had been asking some time in vain, as Mr. Scott and I were anxious to breakfast, if we could, at Ankobar with Dr. Roth, and Mr. Bernatz the artist to the Embassy. A large concourse of the principal people of the town accompanied us across the market-place to the edge of their little table hill, from whence they watched us until shut out from view by the sinuosity of the narrow road, which occupied the summit of a ledge separating the slopes of two small rivulets, running in opposite directions around the hill of Aliu Amba, to join each other in the valley in front.

We now rode between two delightful natural hedge rows of a low thorny bush with dark green leaves, and bearing clusters of a black sweet berry; over which trailed in most luxuriant profusion a very sweet scented jasmine; and pushing its way through this mass of vegetation, high above all, flowered the common hedge rose of England. Its well-remembered delicately blushing hue, so unex-

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pectedly greeting me here, elicited a feeling that, with but a little more ardent sensitiveness in my nature, would have thrown me on my knees before it, as Linnæus is said to have knelt to the flowering furze, on first witnessing its brilliant blossoms in England.

The road now became most shockingly stony, strewed with detached fragments of the cliffs around, as we approached the bluff termination of the table land above us. A recent earthquake had brought down considerable quantities, and no attempt had been made to remove the blocks, travellers very patiently seeking out a new path around them. In two or three places, where the *detour* was too great, some desperate spirits had forced their mules or donkeys to breast up the miniature precipices a few feet in height. At one of these situations I dismounted, preferring to walk through the delightfully hanging gardens on either side of me, and along an embowered lane, where a dense shade, and numberless little streams that traversed sometimes considerable distances, contributed to the agreeable coolness of an elevation between 6,000 and 7,000 feet above the level of the sea. Here, as everywhere else, where trees abounded, birds of all characters and colours gave liveliness to the scene. One similar in size and plumage to our sparrow, constructed pensile nests, dropping as it were from the extreme boughs that nodded with these novel appendages. The dove,

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slattern as she is, here also built her nest, a ragged stage of sticks; whilst in the thick bush beneath, the prying traveller could detect the round black speaking eye of some other little expectant mother of the feathered race, as, with head thrown aside, she confidingly and instinctively expects that the goodness of man's nature will not allow him to disturb her sacred functions; a pleasing testimony it is to me, nature's own evidence of the primitive excellence of man, when he and all around were pronounced by the Creator to be good.

Very soon tiring, however, in my weak state and on such a road, I got on to my mule again, which, if she could have spoken, would certainly have echoed the sentiment of the Portuguese traveller, Bermudez, who, in the 16th century, describing the very same road, represents it as giving him an idea of those in hell, from its steepness and roughness. Our poor animals, in fact, were frequently obliged to come to a stand-still to recover their breath; but they soon set their faces to the steep rocks, and managed, in some way or other, to surmount many very queer-looking places, without shedding us into some uncomfortably deep water-cut precipices that, as we got nearer to the end of our journey, began to be exchanged for the verdant hedges of the previous portion. The whole way we were constantly encountering herds of donkeys, heavily laden with grain, which was being brought

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down from the high land to be exchanged in Efat for cotton and salt. The men who accompanied them were, to my surprise, much darker coloured than the people of the lower country, tall, well made, and armed with spear and shield. With loud cries they encouraged the patient animals before them, to quicken their slow and cautious pace down the stony descent. The friendly salutation as we passed was never forgotten, nor did the laughing fast-talking girls who accompanied them spare their smiles, which was quite a merciful dispensation, that made our difficult and fatiguing ascent, much pleasanter than would have been a macadamized road through a desert.

We at length reached a narrow tortuous ridge of at least a mile in length, across which, a walk of but a few yards presented to the view on either side, a deep and extensive valley. That on the left hand is by far the narrower and more precipitous, being bounded by the steep, almost perpendicular face of the opposite ridge of Tchakkah, at the distance of about four miles; whilst that on the right, is of a character exactly the reverse, a widely extending amphitheatrical formed valley spreading from below the feet, far towards the east.

From the summit of an inclined plane, eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, the eye travels for sixty miles over hundreds of little hills, embosomed in the widely diverging arc that defines the bay-like valley, in which is contained the whole

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ot the numberless streams that, joining the small river Dinkee near to Farree, flow into Lee Adu. This lake formed a bright feature of the scene, embosomed in the dark green belt of forest that marks the course of the Hawash; beyond which the sandy plains of Adal, blending with a colourless sky, constituted an horizon in which sight was lost.

Between the two strongly contrasted yet equally beautiful scenes I could have oscillated the whole day, had not I been reminded by Mr. Scott that breakfast would be waiting for us at Ankobar. At this touching appeal I urged on my mule, who now rested herself by a gallop along the very level summit of the ridge that, like a natural suspension bridge, is extended from the hill of Ankobar in the west to that of Lomee on the south, and forms the boundary between these bearings of the upper portion of the Dinkee valley.

In two or three places I noticed that the otherwise narrow ridge spread out into little flats of about fifty yards across. As we passed the first of these, a small heap of stones, surmounted by a rude wooden cross, indicated to the passer-by that a church was hidden in the grove of kolqual and wild fig-trees that occupied the limited expansion. Each of Mr. Scott's servants most reverentially dismounted to kiss the topmost stone, on which the cross stood. A little beyond, the road again contracted, and from the back of my mule, by merely

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turning my face, I could look into either valley on my right or left hand. Along this path we proceeded cautiously in Indian file, passing in one place the site of a devastated grove and ruined church; the scarping effects of constant land-slips on either side the ridge having in this position defeated all efforts of man to prevent the destruction of the sacred edifice, its site having been gradually removed during the process of denudation which is so rapidly altering the physical features of this country. The eastern face of the hill of Ankobar was now before us, the head of a subordinate valley scooped out of that side of the ridge only intervening. Having doubled this by continuing along our level road, we scrambled over a rough precipitous ascent, fortunately only of a few yards in extent, and entered a narrow lane or street between high banks, on which stood a number of straggling thatched round houses, each in its own enclosure. The road appeared to have been worn into a hollow way by the constant passage of man and beast during the many reigns since this hill became a royal residence.

Tradition asserts, and I believe Abyssinian recorded history affirms, that the first occupier of this commanding height was a Galla Queen called Anko, and by the addition of "bar" (door) to her name, native philologists (and they are very curious in these matters) have determined the designation of this town to be, significant of its having been the gate or door

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of Anko. This is rather an unfinished interpretation, as it omits to tell us what it secured; and were it not that we had the circumstantial evidence that the town stands upon the height commanding the only road leading from the low countries to the table land of Shoa, we should be at a loss for the real reason of its very apt name, which it must be allowed to be when that circumstance of situation is known.

After threading our way for at least a quarter of an hour through a labyrinth of high over-hanging banks, topped by ragged hedges, or grey moss-covered palings of splintered fir, we at length reached a large oblong or rather oval building, for one continuous circuit of a wattled wall offered no angles to determine sides. This was covered by an ample straw roof, with far-projected eaves, and having two bright red earthenware pots at the extremities of the crest of the roof, as a finish to the whole. This was the British Residency, and gladly we dismounted to meet our expected friends. Turning aside the green Chinese blind, which, suspended from the top of the entrance, was sufficient to exclude the beggars, and yet admitted some light into the interior, we gained admittance; and having passed through a large central apartment, where mules, horses, and sheep were stabled, I was conducted into a clay-plastered apartment, about six feet by nine, between the inner and outer walls of the building, where I found two gentlemen

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belonging to the Mission, Dr. Roth, the naturalist, and Mr. Bernatz, the artist, just about to commence their breakfast.

Greetings and congratulations were exchanged, and numberless inquiries made about the cause of my detention at Farree. A host of idle Abyssinian servants gathered around, questioning in like manner the native servants of Mr. Scott, and it was sometime before we settled down to partake of the good things which Constantine, the Portuguese cook, during the bustle of our arrival, had taken the opportunity to prepare.

Mr. Scott and I having determined to hurry on the same day to Angolahlah, fresh mules were ordered to be ready by the time I had sufficiently indulged in the luxury of something like English fare, which, for the first time for nearly three months, was now placed before me.

When we started, Mr. Scott volunteered to be guide, and so excused his servants from being dragged on such an unnecessary journey. Having got through the town of Ankobar, we began to descend, progressing more rapidly after passing some distance along the side of a high stockade surrounding the royal residence, which occupied the whole summit of the partially detached western extremity of the ridge on which Ankobar stands. The descent continued for nearly half an hour, the road being exceedingly rough and stony, until we came to the edge of the little river Airahra,

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flowing into the Hawash, the stream of which by its denudation has cut from the table-land of Tchakkah, the long narrow ridge which we passed along during the ride to Aliu Amba.

Formerly the Airahra flowed into the Barissa, and was a tributary therefore of the mighty Nile; but a singular natural operation has effected an alteration in its course, and it now flows in an opposite direction. Physical geography, I think, does not describe a similar character of country as the surface of the table land of Abyssinia presents, or the relative position it occupies in consequence with surrounding countries. These must both be treated of before I can give the reader the manner in which nature is gradually effecting what former Abyssinian monarchs threatened to do, the turning of the waters of the Nile from the direction of Egypt and the north, to the Indian Ocean and the East. A mighty operation which is most certainly going on, and which can be demonstrated, will in the end drain the northern portion of Abyssinia, by a communication being opened between the river Hawash and the Abi, or Bruce's Nile. In this place, however, any description would fail in the effect of conveying a clear idea to the mind of the reader; but in a future page, when more familiar with the country he is now travelling over with me, I will endeavour fully to explain the manner in which this curious process of natural engineering is being carried out.

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We forded the Airahra a little beyond a square stone building with a thatched roof, which was pointed out to me as the water mill, that was erected by the two Armenians whom I met in Tajourah, Demetrius and Joannes. Whatever ability was displayed in the construction, but little judgment had been exercised in its situation, for it stood at the bottom of a deep valley, at the distance of two miles at least, by the circuitous and rugged road, from the town of Ankobar: whilst, on the other side, to look up the ascent of the Tchakkah would have certainly occasioned the fall behind of the cap from off the head.

I do not believe the architects built it for any direct purposes of utility, but to give the Negoos an idea of their mechanical skill. It is now unemployed, if we believe some travellers, by reason of the Jinn or demons, by whose power they say the Shoans believe the mill was put in motion. This assertion is of the same character with that which represents Sahale Selassee putting reverentially a pair of vaccine glasses into an amulet, mistaking the instructions given for their proper use, when it is notorious that for a great number of years the analogous operation of inoculation has been practised in Shoa. I can only say, that when windmills were described as being much better adapted for the purposes of a people who principally inhabit the summits of hills, Sahale Selassee so admired the idea that I was almost

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afraid I should be obliged to construct one. So far from the monarch supposing mills to be worked by demons, he never troubled himself so much, in a conversation with me, as he did to shew how closely he had observed every part of the mill that had been put up, to learn its economy, and the manner in which its effects were produced.

The most laborious employment of the women of Abyssinia is grinding flour. Windmills to perform this duty would diminish considerably the demand for female slaves in that country, and less encouragement would be, therefore, given to the internal slave-trade of Africa, whilst the prohibition of the export of slaves by Mahomedans from the eastern coast, would extinguish the greater part of the infernal traffic at once.

Immediately after crossing the Airahra we commenced a most villanous ascent. I believe that, to be in daily use, and traversed by hundreds of individuals, the Tchakkah road is unequalled in the world for steepness, roughness, and everything else that can contribute to make a road difficult and unsafe. Now a brawling stream, rushing down into the Airahra, covers with a slippery slime the bald face of the rock; here loose crumbling stones treacherously detach themselves from beneath the struggling hoofs of the mule; and there an actual cataract, of at least eight feet high, has to be scrambled over, splashing through spray and the flying gravel dislodged by the ascent. Zigzag

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parallels, as they are termed in fortifications, are the exact description of the route we took up the almost perpendicular cliffs; and our faces were alternately turned nearly due north and south, as we succeeded in accomplishing some ten or twelve yards in the traverse, at every turn we made, peeping over into a deep abyss that yawned before us, and prevented our ride from being extended longer in that direction. Often does the merciful man here dismount from his tired mule, and sitting upon some detached portion of rock, congratulate himself, as he gazes downward, on having effected so much of his painful task; and as he looks upward receives some encouragement to proceed, when he sees the reward of perseverance, in the distant image of some preceding traveller gradually rising in relief against the sky, then suddenly disappearing over the lofty ridge where terminates his labour.

It took us one hour to surmount this awful steep, which, had it been some thousand feet higher, might not, perhaps, have been unjustly compared with similar passes among the Alps; but even then the comparison would hold no longer than the ascent, for, arrived upon the summit, the stranger finds no descent but an extensive table land spread before him, and he cannot divest himself of an idea, that he has reached some new continent. A Scotch climate, and Scotch vegetation, wheat, barley, and linseed, and yet still in inter-tropical

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Africa; he feels as if there must be some mistake, an idea of incongruity, not unlike what I experienced upon seeing in a "united family of animals," several rats seeking a warm retreat beneath the fur of a cat. Everything, in fact, was different to what I had expected, and the nearly black skins of the natives that we met seemed to be unnatural in a country where a chill breeze was blowing.

Koom Dingi, the resting-stone, is a solitary remaining hexagonal prism of grey columnar porphyry, some few feet in height, and stands amidst the fragments of others, very conspicuously on the extreme edge of the Tchakkah. Here it is usual for the weary wayfarer after his ascent, to stop and refresh himself with the bread no Abyssinian on a long journey fails to provide himself with, and carries wrapt up in the long mekkanet, or girdle, that surrounds his loins.

Mr. Scott and myself, however, pushed on our mules, glad at having got over the worst part of the road to Angolahlah, and willing to make the best of our way before sunset, for it began to be a question with my companion, if we should arrive before night at our destination.

The country seemed highly cultivated, wheat and barley on all sides growing close to our path; but no trees or hedge rows enlivened with their verdure or fragrance, the bleak, moor-like scene

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around. The farm-houses were few and far between, neither were they so high nor so comfortable-looking as those of the clustered villages, that crowned every little hill in the vale of the Dinkee, on the other side of Ankobar. The walls were generally a circle of rough, unhewn stones, about three feet high, supporting the usual conical roof of straw. The smoke escaped in white wreaths from beneath the eaves, or issued in a volume from the entrance, and had it not been for some substantial and really English-looking stacks of grain standing near, which prevented the idea of poverty being connected with the apparent discomforts of these dwellings, the name of hovels would have been far too superior a designation for them.

We met very few people on the road, but these had all of them a great number of questions to put, if we would have stayed to listen. We were also several times called upon to stop for the night at the houses of people who ran after us to say, that they knew Mr. Krapf, and that, consequently, we must be their friends, and partake of their hospitality. Although shivering with cold, and nearly tired out, we resisted all such temptations, proceeding at a gentle amble, for which the mules of Shoa are famous, and after a long ride of seven hours, just as the sun was setting, its last rays falling upon our faces, the straggling but extensive town of Angolahlah suddenly opened upon us, as we

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rounded the low shoulder of a ridge which had been in sight for nearly the last hour.

Three extensive, but low hills of nearly equal height, and covered with houses, enclose a triangular space, which forms the centre of the town. Across this, Mr. Scott and I quickly galloped our mules, pulling up opposite a white square tent, at the door of which had already appeared Capt. Harris and Capt. Graham, the news of our approach having been conveyed by a forerunner, who had observed us in the distance.

A very pleasant evening followed; conversation upon home and Indian news occupied the few hours before we retired to rest; and amidst the luxuries and conveniences, so abundantly supplied to the Embassy by the indulgent care of a liberal Government, I almost fancied that I had returned to the pleasures and comforts of civilized life. As my cloak, coats, and carpet, which constituted my bed, were left at Farree, my courteous entertainer, Capt. Harris, supplied me with an abundance of warm clothing for the night, and I slept well in an adjoining tent, of black worsted-cloth, manufactured by the Abyssinians.

Unfortunately, amidst all his kindness, Capt. Harris considered it to be his duty to take notes of my conversation, without my being aware in the slightest degree of such a step, or being conscious of the least necessity for his doing so. On my becoming aware of this circumstance, a few weeks

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after, by the distortion of a most innocent remark of mine, which was imputed to me in a sense that I never dreamt of employing it, I retorted in a manner that led to further proceedings; and from that time all intercourse between the members of the Embassy and myself ceased for some months.

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CHAPTER V.

Staying at Angolahlah.—Waterfall into the Tcherkos river.—Difficulty in obtaining the stores.—Journey to Ankobar.—Female slaves of the Negoos.—Belief of the Shoan Church.—Father Tellez.—Vegetables introduced into Shoa.

June 1*st.*—This morning Capt. Harris and Mr. Scott were busily engaged writing a strong remonstrance to the King upon the subject of the detention of the latter in Farree, and the seizure by the Wallasmah, of the despatches and stores. I had waived all consideration of the indignities offered to myself, as I saw that from some inexplicable reason Capt. Harris wished to restrict the letter to a notice of the imprisonment of Mr. Scott; although I was rather surprised that the letter which was written in English should be taken by that gentleman himself, with a Persian interpreter, who spoke Amharic very imperfectly, to explain it. However, they did not see the Negoos, and beyond the letter being duly entered in the record-book of the Embassy, no other steps were taken on account of the infraction of the commercial treaty which had been entered into between Sahale Selassee, Negoos

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of Shoa, and Capt. Harris, the representative of Her Majesty at that court.

During the three succeeding days, numerous bearers brought to Angolahlah the stores from Farree, and by orders of the Negoos all were deposited in the palace-yard, nor was one allowed to be touched or seen by our Ambassador. All this time I amused myself as well as I could, reading some volumes upon African discoveries; sometimes taking a short walk along a narrow flat through which a little meandering stream flowed directly to the Lomee Wans, or Lemon river, which has cut a deep and wide ravine in front of the village of Tcherkos, celebrated as being the scene of a dreadful massacre of Christians by a rebel governor of Shoa, named Matoka, some few years before. This ravine extends from the south, in a direction towards the north-east, and joins, or is continuous with that to the west of the town of Debra Berhan, where the Barissa, in its course to the Jumma, forms, in the rainy season, some magnificent waterfalls.

Some idea of the depth to which even these early tributaries of the Abi (Bruce's Nile) have denuded their channels may be derived from the fact, that the little stream, along the banks of which I used to direct my steps, after a course of scarcely two miles, leaps down, in one unbroken fall, seven hundred feet to join the rivulet below, for the Lomee

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Wans deserves no higher title. I can easily comprehend, therefore, the astonishing fact that after flowing the short distance of two hundred and fifty miles, the river Abi should be found by Dr. Beke not more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea, although flowing through a table land, the general elevation of which exceeds nine thousand feet.

On the fourth morning of my stay at Angolahlah, a page came from the King to desire Capt. Harris to attend at the palace. Shortly after this was complied with, another summons arrived for one of the soldiers, who was employed as a carpenter, to follow also. In about half an hour, the whole party returned, the interpreter, Ibrahim, carrying in his cloak the torn-up, tarpaulin-covered packages of letters. I now learnt that the Negoos had commanded that the boxes and other things should be burst open in his presence. This arbitrary command being immediately complied with, after the first few were examined, he graciously gave permission for the whole to be removed to the tents of the Embassy, being satisfied with the willingness shown to gratify him in his most unreasonable demands. This humiliating concession, I am convinced, would not have been required had not the monarch felt some jealous misgivings as to the amount of prerogative he had curtailed himself of by attaching his signature to the treaty of commerce; the first fruits of which had been the

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impolitical letter of remonstrance on a previous occasion; the innocent writer of which, Mr. Krapf, had already been made to feel the kingly resentment by the ill-usage that gentleman received from the chief, Adara Billee, when he endeavoured to return to Shoa, after an unsuccessful attempt to reach the city of Gondah.

For the future, I shall endeavour to relate the incidents of my residence in Shoa, with as little allusion to politics as possible, but the reader must excuse the few remarks I have already made, convinced as I am, that the physical failure of the expedition on the western coast of Africa, under Capt. Trotter, is much less to be regretted, than the great moral injury the cause of African civilization and English influence in that continent have sustained by the incapability of one man, and the ill-judged proceedings which characterized his ambassadorial career. I am not the proper person, however, to sit in judgment upon any one; but I know from personal experience, that as regards Southern Abyssinia, the merchant and the missionary must now seek other situations for carrying out their interesting and philanthropic projects for the regeneration of Africa.*

* I had fancied that the political tactics of the Shoan Embassy were unparalleled in history. The "Heimskringha," or "Chronicles of the Kings of Norway," record, however, a somewhat similar display of resplendent genius:—"At this time a king called Athelstan had taken the kingdom of England. He sent men to Norway to King Harold with the errand that the messen-

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I found the weather so exceedingly cold, and the time at Angolahlah pass so uselessly and heavily along, that I was very glad, after a week's stay, to be again on the road back to Ankobar. The day previous to my leaving Angolahlah, I engaged a servant, named Walderheros, tall, athletic, but of most ill-favoured countenance, so much so, that "Gool," to which eastern vampire he was compared by the members of the Mission, became his cog-

gers should present him with a sword, with the hilt and handle gilt, and also the whole sheath adorned with gold and silver and set with precious jewels. The Ambassadors presented the sword-hilt to the King, saying, 'Here is a sword, which King Athelstan sends thee, with the request that thou wilt accept it.' The King took the sword by the handle, whereupon the Ambassadors said, 'Now thou hast taken the sword, according to our King's desire, and therefore art thou his subject, as thou hast taken his sword.' King Harold saw now that this was a jest, for he would be subject to no man. But he remembered it was his rule whenever anything raised his anger to collect himself and let his passion run off, and then take the matter into consideration coolly. Now he did so, and consulted his friends, who all gave him the advice to let the Ambassadors, in the first place, go home in safety."—*Mr. Laing's Translation.*

This is in every particular so curiously analogous to our late political doings in Shoa, that I could not induce myself to abstain from inserting it here as a note. Even the hint of personal violence in the last sentence exactly corresponded with the treatment of the Embassy whilst in Shoa, after the ill-judged letter of remonstrance had been sent; for had it not been for the moderation of the offended monarch, it would indeed have been "Shanta fo, Shanta fo," for the whole party. It was too late to find out that Sahale Selassee was "a novice in European diplomacy," only when the total failure of the Mission attested the want of tact and of all knowledge of human nature by the parties employed by a liberal and too indulgent Government.

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nomen afterwards amongst them. My mule being saddled, we started early in the morning, as I was desirous of getting as far on the road as possible before the sun had ascended so high as to render the ride unpleasantly warm. Walderheros trudged along on foot by the side of my mule, carrying my carabine behind his neck, with his two hands resting upon the projecting portions on either side. He talked incessantly, and it did not seem to matter the least, that I could not understand a word he said. To check him, I repeated, with a very grave face, the whole of "My name is Norval." He listened patiently to the end, and it then seemed to strike him that we should amuse ourselves much better, if he were to teach me in his own language the names of surrounding objects, rather than listen to such another long rigmarole I was also about to treat him with. Thereupon commenced my first Amharic lesson, and as I was a willing pupil, and Walderheros an untiring teacher, I made great progress during the ride.

In this manner we travelled at a slow pace along the undulating broad highroad that, nearly in a direct line, conducts us from Angolahlah to the edge of Tchakkah. We met some few travellers, who, as we passed, exchanged loud and long-continued salutations with Walderheros, kept up until they were out of all convenient speaking distance of each other. A moor, or extensive downs, would convey the best idea of the country around; but

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though no trees or bushes intercept the sight, the whole surface was well cultivated with wheat and barley, or preserved as grazing meadows for the feeding of cattle. Excepting one considerably excavated valley, two or three miles from Tchakkah, the original level of the table land is only altered in the places where it is traversed by shallow water-denuded channels, along which very frequently the road runs, and the traveller proceeds in a broad hollow way, the flat ridges on each side of him rising some ten or twenty feet above his head.

I was not sorry at seeing again the already familiar land-mark, Koom Dingi, although it reminded me of the steep descent beyond. On arriving at the edge of the table land, I followed the advice of Walderheros, and dismounted; for however sure-footed in such perilous descents mules may be, they sometimes slip, as was evidenced by the dead body of one that lay burst among the rocks below, from a slip over one of the precipices. I sat down a few minutes whilst my servant ran to a house in sight, and procured for me the loan of a long slender staff, of some tough wood, like a spear-shaft, which the Shoans generally carry with them when travelling on foot. By the aid of this, I was enabled to get along pretty well, dropping carefully from one huge stone to another, and in this manner, by rough unequal steps, succeeded at length in reaching the stream of the Airahra. I now mounted again, and forded the stony bed of the

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stream, surmounting with some difficulty the miry bank on the farther side, where the deeply-sunken hoofs of my mule were pulled with successive snatches out of the soughing tenacious mud.

Half an hour's ride brought me to the foot of the royal hill of Ankobar. As we ascend, the road passes midway along its steep side, which above and below the traveller slopes several hundred feet. Here we encountered a noisy crowd of chatting romping girls, with large jars slung between their shoulders by a leathern belt, or rope, which passes across the breast. They were proceeding to a meadow below, to fill their jars with water at a little clear stream that fell over a little ledge of stones as it proceeded to join the Airahra. As I passed them, I overheard some of them whispering to the other, "Missela Zingero," a most complimentary speech certainly, meaning nothing less than that I was "like a baboon." These girls were slaves of the Negoos, and their chief employment consisted of this daily duty of carrying water from the stream to the palace on the summit of the hill. No less than two hundred are so employed, and these supply all the water required for the use of the courtiers and guests, besides a body-guard of three hundred gunmen, all of whom are daily fed at the royal table.

On my arrival at the Residency, I was again entertained by Dr. Roth and Mr. Bernatz, who, during the four days I spent with them were as

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kind and as attentive as possible. At the end of that time I became much alarmed at feeling the approach of symptoms threatening a return of the intermittent fever, from which I had suffered so much during the previous eight months. I was not long in determining what course to pursue, but resolved upon leaving Ankobar immediately, and exchange its damp cold atmosphere for the more genial climate of Aliu Amba.

In Ankobar my time was principally occupied in receiving information respecting the character and customs of the inhabitants of Shoa, but these I had more opportunity subsequently of observing for myself.

Respecting the slaves of the Negoos, in addition to the water-bearers just spoken of, I learned that he possessed several hundreds of others. All the gunmen who constitute the body-guard are bondsmen, and of these there are at least one thousand. These are divided into three bodies, relieving each other in rotation after one week's attendance at the palace; so that these men have entirely to themselves two weeks out of three, a period always spent with their families. As individuals distinguish themselves for bravery and loyalty, they obtain grants of houses and gardens, generally in the immediate neighbourhood of the royal residences. When they advance in years, or have sons old enough to attend in their places, larger quantities of land, apportioned according to merit, are given

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to them and they become tenants of the King, only called up for suite and service on the occasions of the "zemitcharoitsh," or expeditions. The grown up sons who fill their places as guardsmen generally reside with their fathers, and in that case their guns are allowed to be taken home with them; but the general rule is, that they should deposit them, after the term of duty has expired, in the armouries attached to the palaces, where they remain under the charge of the Atta Habta, the chief blacksmith. The gunmen have but one superior officer, who is termed "Ulica," or "Shoom." The name of the present colonel, if he may be so termed, is Kattimah. By courtesy he is styled "Atta Kattimah," Atta being a title of distinction applied generally to all courtiers of high rank.

The gunmen, whilst on duty at the palace, receive daily two double handsful of some kind of grain or other; a kind of admeasurement that reminded me strongly of a similar custom of giving rations to slaves among the ancient Romans. Beside this, however, they get one good meal a-day at the King's own table; at least, in an apartment where he superintends this diurnal feast of his attendants, who are plentifully regaled with large teff crumpets and a quantity of ale. With the bread is always provided some cayenne paste, called "dillock," composed of equal parts of the red pods of the pepper and common salt, mixed with a little "shrow," or the meal of peas. This is placed in a number

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of saucers of red earthenware, which stand in the middle of oblong tables of wicker work, about one foot and a-half high. A number of these are placed in the form of a horse-shoe in the banquetting-room, and around, on both sides, sitting upon the ground, the gunmen range themselves, sometimes in double ranks. The King presides over all, reclining upon a yellow satin-covered couch, in a kind of recess, or alcove in one side of the apartment. The greatest order and decorum is preserved, but no restraint appears to be laid either upon appetite or quiet conversation.

Upon occasions of festivals, which are exceedingly numerous, an unlimited amount of raw meat is added to their usual fare. Slave boys carry about a large lump of flesh, held fast over one shoulder by a strong grip of both hands, whilst each of the dining party cuts with his knife such portion he may desire, and then dismisses the boy with his blessing to the next who requires a like uncooked steak. In addition to their entertainment by the King when on duty at the palace, the gunmen receive a monthly pay of from three to seven ahmulahs, or salt-pieces, according to their length of service. Besides the numerous gunmen who are generally slaves born in the service of the Negoos, there is an inferior class who have been purchased from dealers, or have come to the King as the import duty when Kafilahs of these unhappy creatures arrive in his dominions. The usual "assair," or tithe, being taken as of every other

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kind of merchandize that is brought into Shoa. These slaves are employed generally as cutters of wood; and a most toilsome and ill-requited labour is that which they have to perform, for the country around Angolahlah and Debra Berhan is so bare of wood that the inhabitants have no other resource for fuel but the dung of cattle mixed with mire, which are formed into large flat cakes and heaped up in storehouses for protection from the weather. I believe that the quantity of potass in the soil in this part of the country, contributes considerably to the value of this strange kind of fuel, as its combination with sundry other elements contained in the dung saturates the mass with saltpetre.

The Negoos, however, does not employ this kind of fuel in his palaces, but is supplied by the wood-cutting slaves with the cedar-smelling pine-tree, called "ted," or the more adapted for a bright warm fire, the oil-containing wood of the wild olive-tree; both of which grow abundantly in the forests of Kundee and Afrabinah, that occupy the head of some of the numerous valleys sloping towards the Hawash, on the east of the ridge in front of Ankobar. From these forests, the stalwart frames of the Shankalli slaves bear long and heavy burdens of the rended fire-wood up the steep rugged ascent, to the right of the Hill of Grace; and then, for twenty-five miles, to the palaces of Debra Berhan and Angolahlah. Upon this painful and laborious duty, not less than three hundred

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slaves are employed, who receive daily the most wretched fare, either a few handsful of parched wheat, or else, the sour and coarse refuse from the gunmen's table. Still, these, I found, were far from being over-worked; for three days are allowed to each for the conveyance of the load, and the return back from the distant palaces to their homes, which even these are provided with for themselves and their families.

The female slaves are still more numerous; independent of the two hundred employed in supplying the King's household with water, there are, at least, one hundred more, who assist in grinding flour, brewing, and making the "dillock," or pepper-paste.

There are, however, belonging to this class, a more interesting party of female slaves, who are kept in the strictest seclusion; for Sahale Selassee, a descendant of Solomon, continues, as regards his wives and concubines, the customs of his ancestor's court. Two hundred of these young ladies are placed in charge of several eunuchs, and the establishment, in fact, corresponds in every respect with the hareem of an oriental monarch. It is not very easy to obtain information respecting the habits or occupations of these immured beauties; but the more elaborately-spun cotton thread, that is used for the finer descriptions of cloths, which are presented by the Negoos to his greatest favourites and governors, is all made by

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the members of this portion of the royal household.* The large and fine cloth, valued in Shoa at thirty dollars, sent by Sahale Selasse, as a present to our Queen, is woven of thread spun in the palace of Debra Berhan; and the monarch, sole visitor to the apartments occupied by these royal cotton-spinners, has no doubt frequently stimulated his favourite slaves to more careful efforts, as they produced the finely long-drawn thread, by dwelling upon the munificence and wealth of his Egyptian sister, our own well-beloved Sovereign.

Besides learning some little of the condition of the slaves belonging to the Negoos of Shoa, whilst in Ankobar, I also read a considerable portion of "Ludolph's Ethiopic History," a work left in charge of Dr. Roth, the naturalist of the British Embassy, by Mr. Krapf, when he returned to Egypt. I had the opportunity of making use of the whole book upon the doctrine of the Church, contained in Ludolph; and, also, the interesting almanac which is appended to it; but the former is such an evident compilation of what ought to be the faith of the Abyssinian Church, rather than what it ever was, or is at the present day, that I considered any abstract, or account of the Chris-

* The Abyssinian word for thread, "fatalah," has something in its sound that recals the idea of the three spinners, typical of man's destiny. If, as is probable, the mythological representation of the Greeks be of Egyptian origin, then the word "fatalah," may have some connexion with our word fate.

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tians of Shoa, founded upon it, would be one of the grossest impositions that could be palmed upon the reading public. I dare not, in fact, attempt any elucidation of the faith professed by the Negoos and monks of Shoa. They, certainly, have no universal creed, nor any Articles to define what is orthodox belief, and what is not. The chief principle of religion with the heads of the Church in that country seems to be, to think upon this subject exactly as the Negoos does; for if they do not, they are very soon considered in the light of heretics; and how far the principles of the Negoos accord with those of the Abune, or Bishop of Gondah, may be judged from the fact, that he has often been judged to be in contempt, by that holy father, and threatened with all the terrors of excommunication. I confess myself, therefore, unequal to the task of giving any account of the Christian religion in Shoa. To give a correct one, would require a man educated entirely for the purpose by a long study of the subject in all its relations, as connected with the Greek Church, and the Archbishopric of Alexandria, to enable him to collect, compare, and arrange that chaos of religious opinions that seem to characterize the modern Abyssinian faith; and, more especially, that which is professed in Shoa.

Tellez, in his Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia, in the seventeenth century, sums up all that was known in his time; and I do not think that any

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more enlightenment has been vouchsafed since to this benighted Church. Speaking of the proclamation of the Emperor Socinios restoring to the Abyssinians their ancient faith, after an unsuccessful attempt to establish the Roman Catholic religion among them, this author remarks, "This liberty threw them into many errors; for being uncertain what to believe, some of their monks affirmed, that Christ was the Son of God, only by grace; others, that the divinity died with him on the cross, but that he had two divinities, one of which died, and the other survived; others said, one person was composed of the two others, confounded the Divine nature with the human; and others, being quite puzzled, cried, 'Christ is true God, and true man, and it is enough to know that.' Nor was there less division about consecrating the cup, some contending it could not be done with any liquor but wine; others, that it should be water discoloured with six or seven raisins. At length, they agreed it should be done as was used at Alexandria; and finding no abler person to inquire of, they put the question to an Egyptian carpenter, who told them, it was done there in wine; yet they resolved it should be with water and raisins."

This quotation appeared so apt and so true a picture of the present state of Christian belief in Shoa, that I have not hesitated to introduce it here. I should be happy, indeed, to see demonstrated

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that anything consistent or universal upon that subject is entertained; and in that case I should not mind being told, that I had erred in my conclusions from a want of proper knowledge upon the subject.

It must be observed, however, that in matters of Church ceremony the Shoans affect the formula of the Alexandrian Church. But even on this subject we find that a great schism exists, by the contemptuous disregard of tabots, robes, and all outward show whatever, with which the Tabeeban sect celebrate the rites of their worship. To term these people a sect, is not so correct, perhaps, as to call them a caste, for all artisans in Shoa, and I believe in other parts of Abyssinia, are so designated. Blacksmiths, potters, carpenters, in fact, all manufacturing artisans, are called "Tabeeb," and, from this circumstance, when first I heard of their mysterious religious rites, I considered that they would be found to be a community of Freemasons. Even now I give them the credit of practising the primitive customs of the early Church of Christ, as it approaches very much to that simple worship of God which, from the internal evidence contained in some of the Church letters of St. Paul, we may suppose to have distinguished the meetings of Christians in the apostolic age. It is from this circumstance, I connect them in origin, singularly enough, with our institution of Freemasonry; although the primitive purity of

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their parent assemblies has been much better preserved in the simple ceremonies practised by the Abyssinian Tabeebs, than in the festive orgies of the mysterious brotherhood of Europe. I quit this subject for a time, and return to Ankobar.

Whilst staying with Dr. Roth, I frequently accompanied him to a small garden attached to the old house, where Dr. Beke resided during his visit to Shoa. On one occasion our attendant dug up a considerable quantity of potatoes, which had been planted by Mr. Krapf. The seedlings had been sent from Tigre, in northern Abyssinia, by Mr. Isenberg, and the return crop seemed very favourable. At present no advantage has resulted to the natives by their introduction, for the hatred which seemed to exist against everything English extended even to the real benefits that were offered to the Shoans.

Who can help regretting the great mistake of the missionary, in calling political aid to his assistance, but he erred solely by his zeal to extend his opportunities of conferring good upon his fellow-creatures. He grieves now for influence, founded upon respect, that is gone for ever; and from my heart I sympathize with him, for the utter prostration of hope that Abyssinia should become the centre of enlightenment for the rest of the unhappy continent of Africa.

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CHAPTER VI.

Return to Aliu Amba.—Visited by Hy Soumaulee—Complain of being cheated by Ohmed Mahomed.—Christians of Abyssinia and of the Greek Church generally forbidden the use of tobacco.—Miriam's house and furniture.—Islam contempt for Christianity.—Evening walk.—Begging monks.

This morning, Walderheros having hired a mule for two salt-pieces, we proceeded to Aliu Amba. I was not sorry, on reaching the summit of the ridge in front of Ankobar, to see again the Dinkee vale, stretching away before me, studded with eminences and little hill villages. As nearly as possible in the centre of them all, was the flat circumscribed summit of the rock of Aliu Amba, which we did not lose sight of during the whole hour occupied in descending to its foot. The ride was most tiresome, but my mule had more reason to be dissatisfied than myself, and glad she was to be at length ascending the irregular sized steps of displaced stones, which leads on to the little plain before we reach the first houses in the town. Here she broke into a gallop, and carried me unresistingly across the market-place, and along a narrow winding lane, with thatched houses, each

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in its own snug enclosure, on either side. At the wicket of one of these the animal stopped, and my sudden appearance rather astonished two women who were sitting in the door porch busily spinning cotton. "Woi Gypt, Woi Gypt," they repeatedly exclaimed, as they got up from the ground, just in time to meet Walderheros, who now came running up. He soon explained the mistake of the mule, and taking hold of the bridle, led her about one hundred yards farther along the lane, to a house the most miserable looking of any I had yet seen in the town.

Here, however, I was informed Lieut. Barker had resided for nearly four months, previously to his return to Aden, and I had been advised, in Ankobar, to live in the same house, at least until a better one could be obtained from the Governor. The landlady was a poor Mahomedan woman, named Miriam, a widow with two children, one a grown up youth of seventeen, named Ibrahim, and the other a daughter, not more than three years old.

Arrangements were immediately made for my accommodation, and the news of my arrival soon spread about the town. Numerous visitors, Christian and Islam, thronged the entrance of the house all day, the floor being occupied by the more influential ones. I lay in a little recess, just long and deep enough to receive my bedstead, a low wooden frame, with a bottom of interlaced strips

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ide, over which an ox skin was thrown for a tress.

Vith such of my new friends who could speak bic, I managed to keep up something like a ersation, and also with some Indians and sians, who came, among others, to pay their ects, whom I gratified with the relation of all latest news from their respective countries.

he Governor of Aliu Amba, whose name was ta, had not returned from Angolahlah, but his selannee, or deputy, dragged into my presence, he horns, a fine goat, which he requested me ıccept. Walderheros readily consented in my ıe, and relieved him at once of his charge, ch was taken forthwith and slaughtered; the uty-Governor being chief butcher on the occa-ı, getting for his trouble the head and bowels, ch, however, were first brought into me very ifully, to obtain my permission for such a dis-al.

eeing preparations made for eating, the crowd dually withdrew, and with considerable natural teness left me alone to partake of my evening's ıl, without interruption. Fortunately I had ught with me, from the coast, a tea-kettle, ng-pan, and two other vessels of tinned copper. se now became very useful, and Walderheros not long in placing before me a nicely cooked ner of boiled meat.

A report of my arrival at Aliu Amba having

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been carried the same evening to Channo, the next morning I was astonished at seeing the house beset by a number of my Hy Soumaulee friends, who, although they were glad to see me, appeared to be not at all satisfied with something or other.

As none of the Tajourah people had come with them, I sent for an Islam sheik, Hadjji Abdullah, who lived in the next house, to come and interpret between us. This man, by-the-by, came from Berberah, on the banks of the Nile, in Upper Egypt, yet he made himself perfectly understood in the Affah language; and I expect, therefore, that some ethnological connexion will be found to exist between the people of Dongola and the Dankalli tribes, although I understand that this has been denied by some modern travellers, on the ground, singularly enough, of the total distinctness between their two languages.

I was not much surprised to learn that the cause of complaint among the Hy Soumaulee was, that Ohmed Mahomed, who had received from the British Embassy one hundred and twenty dollars, to pay them their wages, at the rate of four dollars each man, had thought proper to give them no more than one each, and a small coarse cotton cloth not the value of half a dollar. Of course the Hy Soumaulee knew nothing of the British Embassy; it was to me they looked for the payment of their stipulated wages, and which, for the latter part of our journey, I had always stated would be

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five dollars to each man. I recollected perfectly that when they were first engaged I refused to sanction more than four dollars being given, on the plea that, perhaps, the expense I was incurring would be objected to as unnecessary, considering that Mr. Cruttenden had paid in Tajourah all the expenses that we were told would be necessary upon the road. Ohmed Mahomed, however, replied, that in case the extra dollar should be refused, Ebin Izaak and himself would each give half a dollar, and so make up the five dollars per man, and I had therefore always told the Hy Soumaulee they would receive five dollars each. When I discovered how they had been cheated by Ohmed Mahomed, who had actually told them that he had not received a dollar from the Embassy, but that the dollar he had given to each was that one promised by himself and Ebin Izaak, I was only surprised they did not sacrifice me at once to their resentment. I soon disabused them of the deceit that had been practised upon them, and promised that, as the British Mission would be in Ankobar in the course of two days, I would go up and see the Ambassador on purpose that the matter should be examined into.

My old escort then went away very peaceably; but so strict are the orders of the Negoos to prevent any strangers, more especially those coming from Adal, to enter the kingdom without special permission, that the arrival of the Hy Soumaulee in Aliu Amba created quite an alarm, lest, on

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the one hand, they should commit violence, although they were unarmed, except with their heavy knives; or, on the other, that the displeasure of the Negoos should be excited against the townspeople for having permitted them to come into Aliu Amba at all.

It was sometime before I became accustomed to the new circumstances by which I was surrounded. My house was merely a round shed, having a diameter of about twelve feet, the wall of dry sticks, five feet high, being surmounted by the usual conical roof of thatch. Opposite to the entrance was a slight deviation from the exact periphery of a circle, occasioned by the recess before mentioned, in which was contained my wide couch. Here the wall bulged out something like a bow window in form, and was covered by a little elongation of the roof in that situation. Nearly in the centre of the apartment was a dilapidated raised ring of clay and pebbles, some five or six inches high, and about three feet in diameter. This formed the hearth, within which two large stones, and the broken-off neck of an old jar, formed a kind of tripod, that occasionally supported a smoke-blacked earthenware "macero," or cooking pot, in which was being boiled either some sort of grain or other for the family, or else the meat for mine and Walderheros' supper.

On one side, ranged along the wall, stood several large jars, two of which, covered by gourd shell

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drinking cups, contained water, whilst others, superannuated by sundry cracks, were partly filled with teff, or wheat. The former is the minute seed of a kind of grass, of which is made the bread of the temperate countries of Abyssinia, as it flourishes best in situations between the wheat and barley fields cultivated upon the high table land of Shoa, and the jowarree plantations in the very low countries on a level with the Hawash.

The only piece of furniture, strictly speaking, in the house, except my bed, was a chair of the most primitive construction, its thong-woven bottom being scarcely six inches from the ground. It would have been altogether a good model for some rustic seat builder about to fit up the interior of a garden alcove. My two boxes assisted, however, in producing a showy effect, one of them being a Chinese trunk, covered with bright red leather, the other a shiny tin medicine chest, and to make them useful as well as ornamental, they were generally converted into seats on the occasion of any visitors of rank calling upon me.

Besides these things, old red gowns of my landlady, and some tattered grass-made baskets and sieves used in dressing and cleaning grain, were suspended from the projecting ends of the stick wall, and made the interior of the house look rather untidy.

Walderheros was one of the few Abyssinians I have met who appeared to delight in cleanliness,

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and a pretty dust he was continually raising, by sweeping with a large handful of well-leaved boughs the clay floor of our residence. He delighted also in the unholy pleasures of the pipe, a severe rheumatism always affecting him when he was about to-indulge; and I often smile when I think of the canting tone and long visage with which he used to apostrophise the inanimate object of his affections, a gourd shell pipe, as he drew it towards him, and excused such a dereliction of duty as a Greek Christian, upon the plea that nothing but the smoke of tobacco could drive out the "saroitsh," or demons, who, according to Abyssinian belief, affect the frame when suffering from any disease.

According to a tradition of the Greek Church, it appears that the devil paid repeated visits to Noah when he commenced building the ark, for the purpose of ascertaining by what means and of what materials he constructed it. The patriarch, however, kept his own counsel, until the devil called to his aid the herb tobacco, with which, it seems, he made poor Noah drunk, and whilst in that state the enemy of mankind wormed his secret from him. Thus assisted (for it is said Noah became an inveterate smoker), the devil availed himself of the darkness of night to undo all that Noah had put together during the day, and this was the principal cause that the building of the ark extended over so long a period: "Ever since

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that time," saith the tradition, "God has laid a heavy curse upon tobacco."* If some of the precepts of the Gospel were observed with equal veneration as is this ridiculous story by Abyssinian Christians, we should not have to regret the low ebb to which our religion has been reduced in this priest-ridden, but I must not say consequently, benighted land.

Walderheros, however, was a business man, and before he sat down to smoke, he was careful to shut out observers of the fact, by fixing in its place the old rotten door of three or four untrimmed trunks of small trees, tied into a kind of flat surface by the tough bark of a species of mimosa tree. This hung by two hinges of thongs to a crooked door-post, and shut against the wall on the opposite side, where its own weight kept the entrance securely closed. When all had been arranged satisfactorily, he would drag the clumsy chair into a position opposite to my couch, and sitting down with his back to the door, place the rude pipe between his feet. Then applying his mouth to the end of its long stem, between each puff he would look up, to tell me in Amharic the name of some object for me to write down, whilst

* This is an old tradition of the Greek Church. Where it is to be found I cannot say, although it is said to be recorded in some of the works of the early Fathers. It is, I think, a proof that tobacco was known in Africa previously to the discovery of America. It is a curious fact, also, that Ignez Pallmee, the German traveller in Kordofan, found in that country potatoes used largely as food.

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he in return would endeavour to learn their Arabic names, which language for some reason or other, he seemed very anxious to learn. I found afterwards that he thought it was English, and wished to learn something of it, on purpose to understand me when speaking my own language, and thus become the admiration of a circle of his acquaintance burning with curiosity to know what I might be saying. Walderheros was, in fact, the best caricature I ever met of that spirit which prompts empirics to employ unintelligible language to increase the presumption of their extensive learning. If any of his friends were present, I could never get a syllable from him but one or other of about a dozen Arabic words he had picked up. Everything was "*ewah*" (yes) or "*la la*" (no), and how happy he was when circumstances admitted of his saying "*tahle*" (come), or "*rah*" (go), and the grave satisfaction with which he turned round to interpret to his simple gaping companions the meaning of the conversation they had just been treated with, was most ridiculously absurd. When he met a real Arab it was still better; all impatience to display his vast knowledge of their language, every word he knew of it would be pressed into service, whilst the wondering auditor, who would have understood him well enough in Amharic, with a vacant look would probably turn to me, and say, "*Arder rigal muginoon fee!*" (That man is a fool!)

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His temper, however, was provokingly good, for besides its being a great contrast to my own, I half suspected under such a bland exterior some deceit must lurk, but he was a lesson in human nature, and patient ugliness will for the future be a recommendation to me. When illness and pain had contrived to make me the most fretful and irritable of mortals, how often have I been reproved, for my unreasonable upbraidings and continually finding fault, by his constantly mild reply, "*Anter gaitah*," "*Anter gaitah*" ("You are my master," "You are my master".)

I was not unfrequently visited by venerable sheiks and learned mollums, who, with the usual Mahomedan assumption of superiority, squatted down upon the boxes uninvited, and considered themselves at liberty to beg, borrow, or steal, as opportunities afforded, without any remonstrance from the Feringhee they affected to patronize.

Although at this time the town of Aliu Amba had a Christian governor, more than three-fourths of its inhabitants were Mahomedans. These were exceedingly cautious in the expression of any dislike towards the religion of their rulers, but their prejudice against the Christian faith only rankled the more in their bosoms. It showed itself chiefly in petty acts of contempt or slight that could not well be complained of without betraying some littleness of spirit. Many of my visitors, for example, when they saw the body of a slaughtered sheep

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hanging upon the wall, would, with the coolest impudence imaginable, hold their noses when they came into the house, as if it had become tainted by being killed by Walderheros.

Again, they always expected to have the first cup of coffee handed to them, and, in fact, this was the only refreshment they ever deigned to partake with me. When my servant complained to me that my visitors represented this, which my politeness in the first place had induced me to practise, to be an acknowledgment of their superiority as Islam believers, I soon put a stop to the mistaken idea, and if they did not choose to take the only cup I had, after me, they went without. It was some time before they became reconciled to the precedence of a Christian, even in such a trivial matter as this. In doing as I did, there was, perhaps, but little credit on my side, for I opposed their prejudice from a zealous weakness that differed not the least from the principle which had actuated them; but the heart of man is everywhere the same. "Thus I trample," said Diogenes, "upon the pride of Plato." "With equal pride," retorted the insulted sage.

Towards evening it was usual whilst I lived at Miriam's, for me, attended by Walderheros, to walk to the edge of the precipitous face, looking towards the east, of the rock upon which Aliu Amba is built. Here, upon a large stone, high above the narrow winding footpath, that leads from one end

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of the ridge to the other, I would sit looking upon the narrow but fertile valley in front, formed by the junction of the two flanking streams that nearly encircled the hill. Numerous little tributaries on each side had formed small pyramidal knolls, carefully cultivated to the very tops. One in particular, higher than the rest, was crowned with a snug-looking village, the conical roof of the largest house in which, pointed into an exact cone the figure of the hill. The name of this village was Sar-amba; the road to Ankobar skirts along its base, leaving on the right hand the town and hill of Aliu Amba. To the left of my position, the peak of the state-prison hill of Gauncho, and the seat of the Wallas-mah Mahomed, was just visible over a continuous range of hills, that diminished in elevation as they approached nearer to the town of Farree, and which marked very well the original level of the once sloping talus, or scarp, which connected the high table land of Abyssinia with the low plains around the Hawash.

Whilst sitting one evening upon my usual stone, the loud whining appeal of two turbaned dirty figures announced the presence of begging monks, an order very numerous in Shoa. Their long prayer to the Almighty was still going on, and I in utter ignorance for what purpose two robust and healthy men could be addressing me in such a monotonous duet. Walderheros pretended to know nothing about them, and had it not been for some

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women who stood by amusing themselves with the appearance of the new come Gypt, or Egyptian, the monks would have had as much chance of obtaining alms from the rocks around me, as of opening my heart or understanding to their appeal. "Ahmulah, ahmulah!" cried two or three of the women, and I then found out that I must bestow in charity a salt piece, the name of which had already become familiar to me.

Walderheros soon came back from the errand I had sent him upon, to procure the bulky coin, which was, however, refused by the surly monks, with a look and grimace that said quite enough, as they duly measured the ahmulah with a span, and found that it was too short for their taste. Again Walderheros was sent to the skin bag in which was deposited the remainder of my last change for a dollar. The cunning fellow, however, instead of procuring another, as he told me afterwards, brought back the same ahmulah again, and as the monks did not think it decent to return it a second time, they growled out the usual blessing of peace and good fortune for me, with an imprecating curse for the benefit of Walderheros, and then walked away.

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CHAPTER VII.

Residence in Aliu Amba.—Settlement with the Hy Soumaulee.—Proceed to Ankobar.—Obtain the requisite sum.—Relapse of intermittent fever.—Occupation.—Geographical information.—Course of the Gibbee.—Character of table land of Abyssinia.

June 18*th.*—I had now been three days in Aliu Amba, and had begun to be familiar with the circumstances around me, when the presence of several of my Hy Soumaulee friends recalled the promise I had made to them, and rendered it again necessary to undertake the toilsome ascent to Ankobar. My Dongola acquaintance, Hadjji Abdullah, lent me his mule, and off I started, leaving the Hy Soumaulee, who accompanied me across the market-place, to amuse themselves how they could during my absence. Walderheros walked by my side, and by nine o'clock we arrived at the Residency where a little flag, displayed, telegraphed the presence of the Ambassador, Captain Harris, who had come into town the night before from Angolahlah. I was compelled to solicit, as a personal favour, that which was denied as an act of justice; on the strong representation that "these thirty dollars would be the price of my blood," our singularly

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constituted Ambassador reluctantly consented to advance me that sum from the treasury. Let it be observed, that not one word of approbation was bestowed upon the endeavours I had made to obtain the restoration of the boxes, &c., left by Messrs. Bernatz and Scott at Hiero Murroo; and when I alluded to that circumstance, the reply I received was, "that any other party coming up would have brought them on." The irritation and excitement consequent upon this interview aided the predisposition to a relapse, and to that I principally attribute the long illness which, from this date, afflicted me for many months.

My request, however, in the end being acceded to, after breakfast I prepared to return immediately to Aliu Amba. Mr. Assistant-Surgeon Kirk brought me a polite invitation from Captain Harris to remain at least for the day. Being the anniversary of Waterloo, some *appropriate* entertainment was proposed, but as I received the message in no very friendly spirit it was not repeated.

Of the thirty Hy Soumaulee engaged at Herhowlee, only seventeen came to receive their additional dollars, the remainder having left Channo with a Kafilah that started before my first return to Aliu Amba. The Ras had engaged them to accompany him across the disturbed country between the Hawash and Hiero Murroo, and after this party had received the dollar and tobe from Ohmed Mahomed, believing they should obtain no more, they had

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taken the opportunity of returning home. The remainder came in parties for the two or three succeeding days, and went away satisfied with me, but with some feeling of resentment against my worthy Ras ul Kafilah, Ohmed Mahomed.

The first decided recurrence of a fit of the intermittent fever, the paroxysms returning every other day, from which I had suffered so much in Bombay and Aden, came on during the afternoon of the day I returned from Ankobar. My illness, however, did not completely lay me up; for although on the day when the ague fits occurred it was with the greatest difficulty I could leave my bed, still, during the intermediate ones I could always occupy myself in obtaining information, either in the Amharic language, or respecting the interesting circumstances of novel character which surrounded me.

Many instructive conversations have I had with the numerous retired slave merchants who reside in Aliu Amba. The knowledge these men possessed of the country to the south of Shoa, the kingdoms of Gurague, of Enarea, of Zingero and of Limmoo, with others still more remote, was extensive and valuable, and was the result of actual visits to these places for the purpose of procuring slaves. Successful slave merchants have this character in common with horse dealers, that they are generally intelligent and shrewd men, and when they have no object to serve by concealing the truth, they may be relied upon to a considerable extent; for

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none know better the value of a straightforward tale to secure confidence and good opinion. Profound judges of human nature from their habits and occupation, no one speaks truth like a clever cheating slave-dealer when it will suit his purpose. One of them in particular, however, I chose to be my geographical instructor,—an old man named Ibrahim, a native of the city of Hurrah, who possessed every mental requisite to have been recognised as a first rate traveller, had he only possessed opportunities to record the observations he had made upon men and countries that he had visited.*

Ibrahim had evidently amused himself during his journeys into slave districts by examining the characters of the very different people with whom he came in contact, and the striking contrasts he observed had led his attentive mind to the consideration of the probable causes for the anomalies he witnessed of the black Shankalli, the red Amhara, and the yellow Gonga, all inhabiting a plateau of limited extent. In the course of his long

* This individual figures in Major Harris's "Highland of Ethiopia" as Hadjji Mahomed; and the whole occurrence there related happened during the journey to the coast in 1843. It is difficult, therefore, to understand how it could be recorded as an incident of a journey in 1841, and in an account stated to have been written in the heart of Abyssinia. Numerous other instances of this kind of interpolation of adventure could be pointed out which would be immaterial, only, as I shall probably allude to the same circumstances myself, of course I am anxious not to be supposed to borrow them from the work of a cotemporary.

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life having traversed in different directions the whole of the table land from Enarea to Gondah, he had been enabled by comparison and re-observation to check and correct himself upon many points which would otherwise have been very obscure. It was not unusual for him to repeat to me instances of such errors that he had at first fallen into, but which he was subsequently enabled to correct by other opportunities of observation. His ideas upon ethnology were also exceedingly interesting and curious, and I am convinced myself that many conclusions he had arrived at on this subject are correct, for by comparing my book-acquired information with the remarkable knowledge he had collected from facts, I could confirm many of the singular truths that seemed to have enlightened his mind, and which contributed greatly to my own progress in that science.

My aged instructor would frequently draw upon the earth floor of my residence a rude diagram of the elevated plateau of Abyssinia, which was supposed for our purposes to extend to the parallel of Massoah in the north, and to that of Zanzibar in the south. East and west its extent was represented to be about half this distance. In a large depression in the eastern border, the sources of the river Hawash were represented to be, and opposite, upon the west, was a similar indentation, where the waters of the various rivers that drain this table land fall from above to join

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the Nile below. Abyssinia, in fact, stands prominently upon the low land around it, like an island in a dried-up sea, and it is this which has given occasion for the Abyssinians to compare their country with the orange red flower of the Soof, (*Carthamus tinctorius,*)* the compound corolla surrounded by sharp thorns, which are supposed aptly enough to represent the barbarous Galla tribes that beset Abyssinia on every side.

In this delineation of Abyssinia by Ibrahim I first observed the discrepancy between the present received opinions of our geographers, that that country is connected on the south with a supposed extensive table land in the interior of Africa, and that which is entertained by the natives themselves, of the well defined and distinctly marked isolated plateau they inhabit.

Upon the represented surface of Abyssinia two principal streams were now delineated, one called the Abiah, flowing from the east and the south; and the other from the north, the Abi, or Bruce's Nile, which falls into the Abiah immediately after leaving the table land in the vicinity of Fazuglo. From the rivers Abi and Abiah is derived the name Abisha, the original of our word Abyssinia, signifying the country of the Abi; "cha" or "sha," country, being a frequent compound of the names of large localities, as Dembeacha, the country of

* By the old Portuguese writers denominated "the flower Denguelet."

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Dembea; Angotcha, the country of Angot; Damotcha, and many others.

We now came to the more interesting examination of the sources and course of the river Gibbee, the great geographical problem connected with this country as yet undecided by any competent authority. There is no doubt, however, that the Gibbee of the present day is the Zibbee of the Portuguese travellers of the seventeenth century, and the Kibbee of Bruce. Recent visitors to these countries, Krapf, Beke, and Harris, all bear testimony to the correctness of the account given by their predecessors, that this river runs to the south and empties itself into the Indian Ocean. I have ventured to differ altogether from these travellers; and, as will be perceived in my diagram map at the commencement of this volume, I direct the stream of the Zibbee or Gibbee to the north and west, contributing to form the much larger river Abiah, which is the main branch of Assa-abi, or red river, most erroneously written in all European maps Bahr ul Assareek, or the Blue Nile. It is impossible to say with whom this error originated, but probably with some speculative geographer; for by distorting the words "assa arogue" in Amharic, the old red river, a word, similar in sound to a Turkish one, signifying blue, has been manufactured; and Assareek, or Blue Nile, is now the generally received name of the time-honoured Assa-abinus, the Jupiter of the

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ancient Ethiopians, and the original, I believe, of the Egyptian god Serapis. The true blue river is, in fact, the Nile itself, "nil" being the name of indigo at the present day all along the valley of that river; and in the same language, let it be borne in mind, as every other important designation of this interesting part of the world, the word "nil" is still the word for blue, and with such a signification we find it in many names of places both in India and Persia, of which a familiar example is the celebrated Sanatarium station, near Madras, of Neilgherry, from *Nila gira*, the blue hills. The sacred colour, also, that which distinguished the priests of ancient Egypt, was blue, and no doubt bore some reference to the name of the river, which was originally the object of their worship, for in the names of two of its principal branches, Apis and Serapis, we have the elements of the words Abi and Assaabi, the terminal sigma being the usual Grecian affix to foreign names.

In this manner I bring in the authority of Herodotus, and of the Egyptian priest who informed him of the origin of the Nile, in support of my views respecting the rivers of Abyssinia.* It is

* None of the *Egyptians*, or *Africans*, or *Grecians*, with whom I had any discourse, would own to me their knowledge of the fountains of the Nile, except only a scribe of the sacred treasury of Minerva, in the city *Sais* in Egypt. He, indeed, cheerfully told me that he certainly was acquainted with them. But this was the account he gave, that there were two mountains, with peaked tops, situated between Syene, a city of Thebais, and Elephantina; the name of one of

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generally admitted that the Bahr ul Abiad was scarcely known to the ancients; at all events it held but a very inferior rank in any account of the rivers of Africa that has been transmitted to our times. I am, therefore, led to believe that the scribe of the sacred treasury of Minerva, who willingly informed Herodotus of what he knew respecting the sources of the Nile, alluded to the two streams of the table land of Abyssinia, the Abi flowing from the north, and the Abiah flowing from the south; which rivers uniting formed the Assa-abi of ancient days, the Assa-arogue of modern times, and which most certainly was the object of religious worship among the ancient Ethiopians.

I would not dare to advance an opinion so directly opposed to the apparently well-considered conclusions arrived at by previous travellers, but that I am convinced that those which they now advocate have been the result of biassed consultations in the closet, where ingenious, but not travelled, geographers have successfully combated the actual results of information derived upon the spot.

which was *Krophi*, of the other *Mophi;* that from the midst of these two mountains arose the bottomless fountains of the Nile; one part of its stream ran towards Egypt and the north, the other part towards Ethiopia and the south. But that the fountains were bottomless, he said that Psammeticus, a King of Egypt, had made the experiment; after having tied ropes of great length and let them down into the fountains, he could not reach the bottom.—*Herodotus*, book ii.

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Krapf, Beke, and Harris, all sent home maps and information, in which the river Gibbee is made to join the Nile, and each have successively given way to subsequent influences. The fact of the Assa-abi, or Assareek, flooding in May, according to the observation of Mr. Inglish, who accompanied the expedition of Mahomed Allee to Senaar, could not be accounted for by Abyssinian travellers without, in fact, leading the Gibbee, or some other large river, to join the Abi, or Bruce's Nile, for this latter does not commence to swell before the latter end of June, and could not therefore contribute to the rise of the waters of the Assa-abi in May. This was another reason that should have influenced these travellers to adhere to their Abyssinian information, for no argument that could be brought to bear against it could stand for a moment. But, it has been observed, there is the positive testimony of the Father Antonio Fernandez, who, in 1615, passed over the Kibbee twice in his journey to Enarea and Zingero. To this I answer, that the historiographer of "The Travels of Jesuits in Abyssinia," F. Balthazer Tellez, so represents it, but not, I think, upon the authority of Fernandez, but merely as an opinion of his own; but asserted with so much positiveness, that it might readily be supposed part of the information which he derived from Fernandez. Compare what Tellez says in his summary of the rivers of Ethiopia—"There is another celebrated river called Zebee, *said*

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to be greater than the Nile itself, rising in a territory called Bora, in the kingdom of Narea, which is the most southerly, and whereof we shall speak hereafter. It begins its course westward, a few leagues farther turns to the northward, and runs about the kingdom of Zingero, of which we shall also give an account, making it a sort of peninsula, as the Nile does the kingdom of Gojam. After leaving this kingdom, it takes its course to the southward; and some say, it is the same that falls into the sea at Mombaza." Tellez alludes to the course of the Zebee again, when recounting the visit of Fernandez to the Court of Zingero; but merely observes, that it encompasses the kingdom of Zingero, making it a sort of peninsula, and then runs to empty itself towards the coast of Melinda; thus embodying, as it were, in an account of the southern parts of Abyssinia, professed to be given by Fernandez, that view of the course of the river he had previously advocated and represented in the small map placed at the commencement of his volume.

Tellez, whilst he is minute enough upon the manners and customs of the people of Abyssinia, and dilates upon the history of the labours of his order in that country, contrives to mystify us considerably in the geography and politics. I cannot help thinking he was directed by some Government to write as he did for a particular purpose, or was jealous of other nations reaping the benefits of the ill-judged policy of the Jesuits,

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which had terminated in their exclusion from the country; and, which, he was fully conscious, was a very available and a wide field for religious zeal or commercial enterprise to reap rich rewards for the trouble of exploring.

It is a matter of the greatest notoriety, that even in the present enlightened times, it does not follow, because the emissaries of any Government visit and observe unknown countries, that they give correct geographical or political information for the benefit of other nations. Least of any, can such disingenuousness be expected from the Portuguese Court of the seventeenth century; and I cannot therefore, but believe, confirmed as the opinion is by the internal evidence of the book itself, that the imperfect, incorrect, and distorted account of the travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia, was written for the political purpose of misleading the enterprising spirits of other nations. Most effectually did it accomplish this object, and for two more centuries was this important country consigned to that obscurity, in which, for so many ages previous to its re-discovery by the Portuguese, its history had been involved. This, however, was not the only injury done to the progress of human civilization; for whilst the natives were thus allowed to fall still lower in barbarism, the Jesuitical statements interfered with European enlightenment; and geographers and men of letters have been misled in many particulars respecting the character of the

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country, and of the disposition of the various people who inhabit Abyssinia. I can ill afford the space, but to illustrate the manner in which Tellez endeavours to mislead, as regards geographical matters, I will here introduce a most glaring instance, which, I trust, may be received as my apology and excuse for presuming, as I have done, to question the integrity of the great authority of recent Abyssinian travellers; for, without Tellez, they have no authenticated evidence to oppose against that, which I can bring forward to prove that the Gibbee flows, not to the south, and to the Indian ocean, but to the north, and into the Nile. Even Bruce, much as I respect him, as the prince of travellers, evidently follows Tellez in his account of the Gibbee; and it is curious to remark, that not only as regards this river, but upon other subjects where he has exaggerated so much as to be supposed to be drawing upon his imagination, he is actually using almost the very words of the Jesuit historian.

Speaking of the Embassy dispatched to Portugal in the year 1613, by the Emperor Segued, which consisted of some natives of rank, accompanied by the father Antonio Fernandez, and ten other Portuguese, Tellez informs us, "These men were directed to take a route through Narea to Melinda, upon the coast, the Emperor believing (and he, it may be supposed, would be very likely to have the best information) that the road was shorter and

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easier than the one to Massoah." This opinion we find still farther confirmed when the Embassy arrived at Narea, for there the Bonero, or Governor, determined the party should not proceed "by the way they designed, which was the best, lest the Portuguese should become acquainted with it." These native authorities, however, are deemed of no value by Tellez, who thus decides the matter at once, "Now, to deal plainly, the way the father (Fernandez) proposed through Cafah was no better than this (the road back again to the north and east); because, proceeding south from Narea, there is no coming to the sea without travelling many hundred leagues to the Cape of Good Hope, as may appear by all modern maps, so that the whole project had nothing of likelihood."

Father Antonio Fernandez himself does not appear, in Tellez, to have kept any regular account of the journey; and yet there is internal evidence in what is given to the reader in the "Travels of the Jesuits," that in reality the greatest attention was paid to every subject of interest; and as we must conceive that the first object of the Government, who supported and encouraged the Jesuits in Abyssinia, was to obtain correct geographical knowledge of that part of Africa, I cannot but believe that this was particularly attended to by their agents; but that when afterwards the travels were published to satisfy public curiosity, it was found convenient to suppress the most im-

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portant information. This reason is sufficient also to account for the mysterious disappearance of the greater part of the documents which assisted Tellez in drawing up his compilation, a suspicious circumstance of itself, that the object of this book was anything but to give a correct description of the physical character and capabilities of the country of Abyssinia.

I have dwelt too long, perhaps, upon an unimportant subject, but it is necessary, because modern geographers invariably advance Tellez as an unquestionable authority upon the subject of the water-shed of the Gibbee; and with his assistance they have already obliged more than one Abyssinian traveller to throw aside information received in the country, and instead of adhering to opinions advocated whilst there, to repudiate the whole, and follow in supporting errors they thus confessed themselves unable to refute. This is not the only evil of their inconsistency, for their present opinions are so many important authorities which have an equal claim to the attention of the scientific world as my own, and render it impossible for my testimony, even were it demonstrated to be correct, to be received against the conjoined evidence of two or three others who have visited Abyssinia as well as myself. This I admit to be fair, but not so the attempts which have been made to convince me of my geographical errors, not by argument, but by threats of all kinds of critical pains and penalties,

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for my presumption in advancing views so contrary to generally received accounts. Be it so, I feel quite assured there is some portion of the reviewing press, who will scorn to be made the instruments of unfair attacks upon any one, contending only for what he believes to be true, and for no other motive, but the instruction of himself and others.

Around his rude outline of Abyssinia, my native informant Ibrahim placed representatives of the Shankalli, who surrounded that country, except upon its eastern side, where another black race, the Dankalli, testify by their skins, to a similar low elevation of the country they inhabit. Ibrahim thus undesignedly proved the correctness of his information, for it struck me, that no physical feature is so conclusive as to the character of a country, whether high or low land, than the complexion of its inhabitants. An exception, however, to thus entirely surrounding the high land of Abyssinia with the two nations of blacks was made to the north and south of the country of Adal, where two oppositely situated water-sheds are drained by the two rivers, the Tacazza and the Whabbee, the former flowing into the Nile, the latter into the Indian Ocean at Jubah. The character of both the countries through which these rivers flow are, in one respect, similar; their elevation being intermediate between the low plains of Adal, and the table land of Abyssinia, or about six thousand feet high above the level of the sea. The

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inhabitants of either water-shed also resemble each other in their colour, being a dark brown, modified by parentage and descent, for the complexion of the inhabitants of Tigre and Angotcha, approaches to the red colour of the real Abyssinian, whilst the skins of the Gallas around the sources of the Whabbee have a duskier inclination towards the original colour of their Dankalli and Shankalli parents.

To the north of Dembeacha, around the lower course of the Tacazza, European travellers attest the existence of Shankalli, whilst the officers attached to the exploring armies of Mahomed Allee, found them also all along the course of Bahr ul Assareek to Fazuglo, and report them as extending an indefinite distance to the south. On the other hand, I have seen and spoken with Shankalli or negroes who had been brought into Shoa from beyond Kuffah, Enarea, and Limmoo; and Ibrahim also was most particular in stating that all around those places to the south was the black country, *Tokruah*, the Amharic name for that colour, and which is the origin of the general native designation of interior Africa, and is synonymous with *Sudan*, derived from the Arabic *Asward*, black.

The inference that is to be derived from this fact, of the Shankalli being found in the immediate neighbourhood of a very light complexioned people, is, that the high table land of Abyssinia suddenly slopes, on its south and west sides, from the elevation of ten or twelve thousand feet, to a low

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country of less than three thousand feet high, a scarp of perhaps thirty miles only intervening between the two very differently situated countries.

I take it for granted the reader is aware that the light yellow-coloured people of Enarea and Zingero attest, by their skin, the elevation I have assumed for these southern Abyssinian kingdoms. It is, I think, undeniable that the table-land increases in elevation to the south, for all travellers agree that the complexion of the inhabitants becomes fairer as they increase in distance from Shoa in that direction; and I need not observe the contrary would naturally be expected as we approach nearer to the equator. Several people I have seen, however, who came from within five degrees of the line, and were much lighter coloured than the generality of Spaniards. This would not be the case with a people living only upon a mountain ridge, even if the delicate frames of the yellow Zingero people attested, by a different character, the hardy life of a mountaineer. There must be, therefore, I should suppose, a considerable continuity of surface to seclude a large family of man from the otherwise unavoidable intercourse with the darker skinned inhabitants of the low land, and to have enabled a very ancient people to continue unchanged their fair complexion nearly in the centre of a continent of blacks.

These are the principal reasons which have led me to contend for the tabular character of Abyssinia to

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the south, instead of, as modern travellers invariably represent it, as being divided through its extent by an anticlinal axis, which divides the waters that flow to the north-west and to the Nile, from those which, on the contrary, proceed to the south-east and to the Indian Ocean. This impression, and Tellez's apparently positive statement that the Zibbee flows to the southward, I am afraid, however will still be proof against my arguments, and until some enterprizing traveller visits the countries of Enarea and Zingero, and decides by actual observation, my readers may still amuse themselves by forming opinions upon this debatable subject. For their assistance I have, therefore, recorded the results of my observations, and the information I received in a country scarcely one hundred miles from these interesting and remote localities.

The Gibbee, or Zibbee, by Ibrahim's account, rose in Enarea, where its sources were called *Somma*, which, in the Gonga language signifies, "head." At this place, annually, many superstitious practices are observed, the last remains, I expect, of the ancient river worship that was once general throughout the whole of Abyssinia. The Agows of Northern Abyssinia, who are of Gonga origin, still profess to worship the Abi, although no traveller has yet given us any account of their ceremonies; the more to be regretted, as it would throw considerable light upon the ancient customs of an

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early state of society, when Abyssinia was the centre of all civilization in the world.

After flowing some distance to the south and east, the Gibbee was represented to me as taking a course similar to that of the Abi around Gojam, nearly encircling the kingdom of Zingero, which is separated from Guragué by this very stream, then a large river, and still flowing to the south. After passing westward between Zingero and Kuffah, the Gibbee then takes the name of Ankor from the principal province of Zingero which borders upon it, and in which the King resides; it then bends towards the north and west, passing to the south of Enarea, where it is called Durr, and receives a large river, the Omo, coming from Kuffah. From several reasons I believe the Omo to be the main branch, and the Durr merely another name for it; however, as some large stream does join the Gibbee from the south, I have so designated in my map one which I have laid down as coming from that direction. After the Gibbee has passed Enarea, it flows to the west of Limmoo, where it is best known as the Abiah, the common Galla name of the large river which, in that situation, breaks from the table-land, and then proceeds towards the north some distance through the country of the Shankalli before it receives, in the neighbourhood of Fazuglo, the waters of the Abi, which drains northern Abyssinia. After the junction of these two, the name Gibbee then re-assumes in part its most ancient

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name Assa-arogue, the original of Assareek, meaning in Amharic the old Assa, or red river, so called from flowing through the country of the red people, in contradistinction to that portion of the Nile supposed to flow from a country of the whites: hence, the name of Ab-Addo, the principal western branch of the Bahr ul Abiad, which, as in Arabic, signifies "the river of the whites."

Gibbee, the modern form of Zibbee, lends its name to assist in unravelling the mystery of its course, for I derive it from the word Azzabe, or Assabi; the origin of the Assabinus, whom Latin authors represent to have been the Jupiter of the Ethiopians, by which is meant, I presume, the principal god of the people. If it be admitted that its name and that of the Zibbee are the same, there can be but little doubt of their streams being one, and that the latter is the early course of the former. Strange rumours reach the ears of travellers in Abyssinia, of human sacrifices being still practised by the Pagan inhabitants of Zingero, whilst even in the Christian kingdom of Enarea it is not unusual for slave Kafilahs, on crossing the Gibbee, to propitiate the god of that river by immolating the most beautiful of the virgin slaves in its waters. A similar custom was formerly practised in Egypt; for an Arab geographer, quoted by Mr. Cooley, either in his Notes to "Larcher's Herodotus," or "The Negroland of the Arabs," records this circumstance. This coincidence of an inhuman prac-

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tice seems also to point to a connexion between the sacred character of the Gibbee and that of the Nile. Another ceremony also, in which, on the election of a king, the inhabitants of Zingero collect upon the banks of the Gibbee, until upon some one's head a bee should rest, who is immediately proclaimed to be the sovereign, I have some idea was the reason of that little insect being made the hieroglyphical representative of king or chief among the ancient Egyptians, and perhaps at one period of their history a similar custom prevailed among them.

The Gibbee is at the present time a holy river, as was the Assabi among the Ethiopians, and which was also the original of the Egyptian god, Serapis. This latter supposition is confirmed by the fact that, in some parts of its course, the Abi of Northern Abyssinia at the present day is similarly worshipped, and that its sources, in the time of the Portuguese missionaries, were actually the scene of Pagan sacrifices. The ancient Apis I consider to have been no other; for the Grecian terminal being rejected, the identity of the two names Abi and Api is manifest, whilst that of Assabi and Serapi is equally evident.

That the river Gibbee cannot be the earlier tributary of the Gochob of Dr. Beke, is proved by what we are told by Major Harris, of a river so called, entering the sea at Jubah. If this be the case there can no longer be any doubt of the identity of the Gochob with the Whabbee, and which I feel more assured of, from the information I have

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received, compared with the accounts sent to the Geographical Society of Paris, by M. d'Abbadie, from Berberah, on the Soumaulee coast, respecting the entrance of the Whabbee into the sea at Jubah.

Nor is this idea at all affected by the discoveries of Lieut. Christopher on the coast near Brava, respecting a river said to be the Whabbee, which runs parallel to the sea-coast in that situation for more than one hundred miles, and then terminates in a fresh-water lake, some short distance inland; for this may be the northern arm of a delta-formed termination of the river, which has been prevented from reaching the sea in that situation, by the strong marine current known to exist along that coast, to the south-west. This has occasioned the silting up of this entrance of the river, so that it is only in very high seasons indeed of flood, that the fluvatile water bursts through, or overflows the barrier, and escapes to the sea. The mouths of several other African rivers present similar phenomena. The discovery of the Haines branch of the delta of the Whabbee proves, in fact, the correctness of all native accounts, who represent a large branch as leaving the main trunk of the Whabbee at Ganana, and terminating in a lake of fresh water, not far distant from Brava, and which intercepted river is supposed to resemble "*a tail*," and hence the name, "Ganana." All informants agree, however, that the principal stream, still called the Whabbee, proceeds to Jubah, so that unless the

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Gochob is admitted to be that river, some other *embouchure* must be procured for the latter.

Denying, in this manner, the connexion of the Gibbee with the Gochob of Dr. Beke, for every Abyssinian informant states positively that the Gibbee does not go to the Whabbee, and which, as far as I can judge, appears to be the original of the Gochob, there is but one other river flowing to the south, which the Gibbee can be supposed to join. This is the Kalli, which empties itself into the Indian Ocean by many mouths, about three degrees south of the equator, the principal of which appears to be that of Lamoo. No traveller gives any account of this river, though certainly it is a most important one in connexion with our future intercourse with the high land of Abyssinia. It is, as its name, Kalli, implies, a river of the black people, as the Assabi, or Zebbee, of the table land above belongs exclusively to the country of a red race. The Portuguese name, Killimancy, is merely the addition of a word, signifying river in the Shankalli language, to the original Arian term, Kalli. The sources of this river are upon the southern scarp of the Abyssinian table land, in the same manner as the tributaries of the Hawash arise upon the eastern border. The two principal branches of the Kalli, I was told, enclose or receive in the bifurcation, the termination of the table land to the south.

A considerable degree of interest attaches itself

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to this river, and I could wish to see the attention of our geographers and politicians directed to its examination. All the red Abyssinian slaves, after a month's journey through the country about the upper part of its course, are then embarked and conveyed down this river to Lamoo, to be carried away and disposed of in the Asiatic markets. It is by this channel also the Abashee colonies on the Malabar coast, of which Major Jervis has written some notices in a late volume of the "Bombay Geographical Society's Journal," are recruited. Those of the native Christians on the same coast I have seen myself are decidedly of Abyssinian origin, and perhaps that religion may have been introduced into India by missionaries from that country. It was singular that when an important and expensive Political Mission was about being sent into Abyssinia, some inquiries were not made respecting this southern route, along which a considerable intercourse at the present day exists between India and Abyssinia.

Independently of the table land to the south of the Gibbee increasing considerably in elevation, every other circumstance connected with its name and situation tends to show that the direction of its stream cannot be towards the south to join the Kalli. The stream of the Gibbee, in fact, is a large and navigable river, crossed immediately by slave Kafilahs from Enarea and Zingero during their journey to Lamoo, and they have then to proceed

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an entire month before they come to another river, the Kalli, to convey them to their destination. The Whabbee and the Kalli, therefore, can neither of them be supposed to be the lower stream of the Gibbee; but there is a large river of which every Galla speaks who comes from Limmoo, Jimma, and other districts in that neighbourhood; and which flows south, say Mr. M'Queen and Major Harris, whilst Dr. Beke denied its existence altogether, until my views were laid before the Geographical Society. He admitted certainly having heard, the small stream of the Dedassa, flowing into the Abi, in one instance called the Abiah. This gentleman appears to have confounded the names Abi and Abiah, believing that the latter was the Galla pronunciation of the former, and his Geography of Southern Abyssinia being founded upon this supposition, he fell into the opposite error to Major Harris; and crowded into a position too close upon the south of the Abi, countries which, upon the authority of the latter, have been carried to a situation not far from the equator; and the Abiah, contrary to any sound information that could possibly have been received, is taken away, to flow through unknown lands to the south and west, where it is made to join the *Bahr ul Abiad.* Such are travellers' reports, and I profess to give no better, only that I cannot afford to sacrifice the information I have obtained upon this subject, to the speculative ideas of geographers, however learned, and therefore obstinately persist in

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what they consider to be error, when it has more the appearance of truth, than have the theories which they can only advance in opposition.

The Abiah, which is almost denied to exist by one traveller, and taken into remote countries by another, I believe to be the main branch of the Gibbee, and have accordingly so laid it down in the sketch map of the different water-sheds of Abyssinia I have projected to assist me in explaining my ideas upon the subject.

I will not, as I am almost tempted, recapitulate the evidences that the Gibbee, the Abiah, and the ancient Assabi, are one and the same river, and the principal branch of the Abyssinian Nile; for if that which I have said is not sufficient to convince; to continue would only be to fatigue the reader with suppositions, probabilities, and beliefs, that would still, in the end, leave the subject in quite as unsatisfactory a state as it remains at present.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Water cure.—Nearly killed by it.—Ordered to leave Shoa.—Proceed to Angolahlah.—Courteous treatment of the officers of the Negoos.—Entertainment.—Remarks upon the character of Sahale Selassee.—The Mahomedan religion.

My illness increasing, each succeeding paroxysm of fever leaving me in a more weakened condition, my servant proposed a remedy, boasted never to fail in effecting a cure. I had but a scanty stock of medicines, that I had brought with me from Aden, and these seemed to have little or no effect upon my disease; so I determined to give Walderheros a chance of distinguishing himself by conferring health upon his "gaitah" (master).

To do this properly, it was deemed necessary that some water should be fetched from a spring by a man, and as this is a species of labour always performed by women, Walderheros, not to be seen at such employment, undertook to take the water-jar for that purpose the next morning before daylight. I also learnt that the cure was to be effected by a kind of shower-bath, to which I was to submit, sitting down whilst the water was poured from a height

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upon my head, during the attack of the rigors which preceded the hot stage of the ague fit.

The next day, accordingly, the water having been properly procured, on the first symptoms of the fit coming on, I sat down in the shade of a large ankor tree, a variety of the myrrh, that grows at an elevation of seven thousand feet above the sea, but yields no gum. Here, wrapt up in an Abyssinian tobe, which upon the first fall of the water I was to drop from my shoulders, I awaited the coming shower from above, for Walderheros had climbed into the tree, whilst some assistants lifted up to him the large jar which contained the water. The remedy, however, when it did come down, immediately laid me full length upon the earth, for what with the collapse of the system attendant upon the cold stage and the cold falling water, it certainly cut short the fever, but nearly at the expense of my life, for even when I recovered from the first shock, and was taken back to my bed, I was delirious for several hours after,—a circumstance that I have often had reason to be thankful for, had not been a very usual symptom of my disease.

After this experience, that white men required a very different medical treatment to the red Abyssinians (for in this manner Walderheros endeavoured to account for the failure of his hydropathic remedy), I was not asked again to submit to any more native means of cure for some time; as my recovery, however, was of the greatest importance

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to me, I commenced a regular course of quinine and James's Powder, and had it not been for a most disagreeable interruption in the quiet and retired life I was leading in Aliu Amba, I might, perhaps, have been soon restored to health.

On the tenth day after my last visit to Ankobar, the Negoos and the members of the Embassy having, in the meantime, left that city for Angolahlah, a message was brought to Miriam's house for me to go immediately to the Governor of the town, who had just arrived from the Court on purpose to have me brought before him.

Feeling a little better than I had been for some time, and being curious to know what business the Governor could have with me, I followed his messenger, taking with me, as a present on being introduced, an old pocket telescope. It was fortunate that I recollected to do this, for on my giving it to him he was so highly pleased, that he told me, through an Islam Hadjji named Abdullah, that he was willing to serve me in any way he could in the very awkward position I now learned I was placed in, by the order he had received from the Negoos. For some reason or other, my presence in the kingdom had raised a jealous feeling somewhere, and, in consequence, a most arbitrary mandate, considering the then relations between Shoa and England, was issued, and I was directed to leave the country the very next day. Whilst we were speaking, two men were sent with

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Walderheros for my boxes, to be brought at once to the Governor's house, previous to their being forwarded to Farree, where the Kafilah with which I had come up, and which was now on the eve of starting, afforded the opportunity of my proceeding to the sea-coast. Here was another practical proof of the value of the commercial treaty, and bitterly I commented, as may be supposed, upon the worthless parchment. I felt quite assured that it would be of no use applying to our Ambassador for redress, so considered it would be best to submit in peace, and made no objections, therefore, to my boxes being taken to the Governor's house.

Not having made up my mind though, for all that, to leave the country, I determined, after I had left Tinta (the name of the Governor) to go and consult with a sincere friend of mine, an Edjow Galla named Sheik Tigh, who had shown himself possessed of the kindest disposition by his disinterested and patient attendance upon my sick bed during the short period I had resided in Aliu Amba. He was a Mahomedan mollum, or scribe, for his occupation was writing copies of the Koran, which he used to sell to the slave merchants who came from the more barbarous countries around Shoa. Either on account of the trifling sum that these manuscript Korans can be purchased for in Abyssinia, or the excessive neatness with which Amhara Mahomedans write Arabic compared with even Arabs themselves, these Abyssinian copies are

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highly prized even along the sacred or eastern coast of the Red Sea, and in Jeddah will command an increased value of two hundred per cent. upon their original cost.

Sheik Tigh concurred immediately in my proposed plan, either of endeavouring to remain in Shoa by a personal request to be made to the Negoos; or of going away to Giddem, and from there to the court of Beroo Lobo, the Mahomedan chief of that portion of the Argobbah, or valley country that extends to the north of Efat, as far as the river Tahlahlac, one of the most northern tributaries of the Hawash. The state of my finances, however, I found would not admit of this latter alternative; for, excepting the thirteen dollars remaining of the Hy Soumaulee money, I had only seven dollars in the world.

It was at length determined amongst us, for Hadjji Abdullah had joined in our consultation, that I should take another present to Tinta, as a kind of bribe, and the real object of which Sheik Tigh was to explain to him. I accordingly packed up a damask table-cloth, and provided myself with three of the most favoured dollars I was possessed of, and thus armed, went again in the dusk of the evening to the house of the Governor. My offering was very quietly received and concealed, by which I perceived the business had been properly managed by Sheik Tigh, and that it was understood I was to have unmolested, three hours' start of him the next

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morning, to get over the most difficult portion of the road to Angolahlah before he followed in pursuit; a little manœuvre necessary to keep up appearances with the Negoos; for although it would have been no very heinous offence to have permitted me the opportunity of appealing to the justice of Sahale Selassee, Tinta might have suffered for his generosity in permitting me to come to Angolahlah, when he had received orders to accompany me to Farree. Tinta, like most Abyssinians, was a really kind-hearted man, but his education as a courtier, and that in a despotic court, had taught him dissimulation and caution.

Walderheros, it may be supposed, was violently affected at the prospect of losing his father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins, all being, according to his account, rolled up in me. He often used to observe, he was my child; though he was (beautiful boy) at least ten years older than myself. He now protested he should never survive our cruel separation. If it had not been for that "kaffu" (wicked) Hawash, those "kaffu Adaloitsh," (wicked Dankalli,) and that "kaffu bahr," (wicked sea,) he swore that he would have followed me over the rest of the world. In this manner he went on talking during the whole of the evening, with many imprecatory bursts of "woi Negoos," and "min Abat," at the same time busying himself making preparations for our sanctioned escape next morning to Angolahlah, and

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what with cooking and expostulating with some imaginary evil destiny that pursued him, he kept me awake nearly the whole night.

As Hadjji Abdullah, after it was dark, had brought me his own mule, it was stabled for the night in my house, and long before cock-crow the next morning we were carefully descending in the dark the step-like road of rough stones which leads from the top of Aliu Amba into the direct road to Ankobar. We were obliged to be very cautious in our progress along the steep slippery bank, and the edges of deep muddy pools produced by the first showers of the rainy season, which had fallen the few days previously, and had not at all improved the condition of the road.

The sun had risen before we reached Ankobar. On this occasion it was unnecessary to go through that town; so having surmounted the long ridge in front, instead of continuing along it, we crossed directly over, leaving the little wooden cross and church of Goodis Gorgis (St. George) in its encircling grove of quolqual and wild fig-trees, on our left hand. The road we followed was exceedingly narrow, and fell very gradually in a prolonged sweep down the steep descent into the valley of the Airahra. Half way down is a broad terrace of considerable extent covered with immense boulders from the destruction of the ridge above, and which appears to be more rapidly denuded upon this face than upon the opposite one looking towards Aliu

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Amba. On a mound of the detached rocks and soil in this situation is built a church, dedicated to "Abbo," the father, the only one I have ever seen so situated except the meeting-houses of the Tabibe sect, who do not pay that respect to ancient superstitions that still influences the other Christians of Abyssinia. A sufficient reason, however, accounts for its low elevation.

At the commencement of the reign of the present Negoos, a great portion of the ancient grove of Abbo and its church still occupied the highest point of the ridge over which we had just come. The denuding operations of the conjointed actions of earthquakes and rainy seasons overcame every endeavour that was made to protect the sacred spot from being encroached upon, it having been one of the most ancient and most revered of the sacred edifices in Shoa. Annually large portions were precipitated into the valley of the Airahra; and ultimately the last portion of the walls of the church disappeared, after a violent convulsion of the earth, and a single line of trees, the remains of a once extensive grove, now marks its former site. The spot is still considered sacred, and so attached were the monks upon the establishment, to the ancient edifice, that, observing that the greater portion of the debris had fallen upon the terrace beneath, they determined to erect upon it a representative of the old church, although on so

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low an elevation compared with the numerous heights around.

This is, however, the only instance I know of a church of the Abyssinian Christians being so situated, for it is a particular feature of the worship in this country that all religious buildings should surmount "some earth o'ertopping mountain;" and to such an extent is this feeling carried, that sacred hills which have become lowered in consequence of the greater denudation of their summits, is a reason sometimes for changing the site of the church to some neighbouring hill that, from more favourable causes, has preserved its height undiminished. A striking instance of this change, and its assigned cause, is found in the circumstances connected with the erection of the new church of St. Michael, which stands upon a hill to the east of the Negoos's residence, in the valley of the "Michael wans." Here two groves are observed standing on hills near to each other, the more modern one being of much greater elevation than the other. Both are dedicated to the same saint, and on asking Walderheros why there should be two, he pointed out the difference in the height of the hills upon which they stood as a reason why the lower should be deserted, and preference given to the higher hill for the site of the "bate y Christian," and the residence of the monks.

Looking upon these groves surrounding temples of

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religion, and serving as retreats for officiating priests, each of whom has his little cottage among the trees, it is impossible to help reflecting upon the changes in man's history, recalled by observing such existing monuments of former feelings and religious prejudices. The question naturally suggested itself, what could have been the popular belief when the more ancient of the St. Michael's groves was first planted; for a long period must have elapsed to have occasioned, by the disintegrating action of its vegetation, so much denudation of the hill it crowns, as to make it more than one hundred feet lower than the present frequented one; and originally it must have been the highest in the neighbourhood. I have observed other customs existing in Abyssinia that strongly reminded me of Druidism and of similar characteristic observances among the ancient Persians; and I certainly looked with some degree of interest upon a grove, that might once have been the scene of the celebration of religious ceremonies, of a very different character to those which distinguish the modern faith.

Although it was so early when we reached the church of Abbo, Walderheros proposed breakfasting. I accordingly dismounted, and after a gaze upwards at the largest tree I had seen since I left England, took my seat beneath its widely-extended branches, upon one of a number of small boulders which had rolled from the rocks above. A quantity of long strips of grilled mutton, was pro-

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duced, and some teff bread, a large manuscript-like roll of which Walderheros carried tied up in his mekanet or girdle. This useful part of an Abyssinian dress is only worn by the men when engaged out of doors. It is one long piece of cotton cloth, about one cubit, or from the point of the elbow to the ends of the fingers, broad, and fifteen, twenty, or sometimes even thirty cubits long. A girdle similar to this was worn by the Jews. Sometimes in Abyssinia it is taken from the loins of a prisoner to secure his hands, exactly as it is said to have been done in Judea.

After breakfast we proceeded along the base of the large hill upon which Ankobar stands, the road winding around its south and west aspects. We then fell into the usual high road on the west of the town, which proceeds along the steep face of the valley, midway between its crest and the level of the stream below. We crossed, by gentle undulations of the road, several short projecting spurs, all of which seemed to be the productive farms of industrious individuals. Thatched residences of mud and sticks, with yellow stacks of grain, were perched upon their extremities, overlooking the sudden cliff-like termination of these subordinate ridges, cut by the action of the constantly running water of the Airahra.

Fording this river, we commenced the fatiguing ascent of the Tchakkah, and after little less than an hour's trot were breathing ourselves at the "resting stone," Koom Dingi. After a short halt,

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we continued our journey over the moor-like solitary fields that, unbroken by hedge, stone fence, or ditch, appeared in endless succession before us. But the reader must understand that, although the general appearance of the country is so flat, he is only reminded of it by the long level lines that bound the view on each side, for, generally speaking, the road lies in broad shallow water-worn channels, which, like hollow ways with banks ten or twelve feet high, have intersected in all directions this formerly undeviating level country. I always fancied that at one time it must have been the bottom of a deeply rolling sea, and what adds considerably to this impression is, the almost total absence of trees, and the bald, gray, stony, appearance of the stratum of light coloured porphyritic trachyte which overlies the whole country, and which looks as if it had only been raised from the waters a short time before. This super stratum of rock is very easily decomposed, and forms a fertile soil for the cultivation of wheat and barley, but its general appearance, unless covered with the crops, is quite the reverse.

About half way to Angolalah we crossed two or three of the earlier tributaries of the Barissa, which is a small river that collects the waters falling to the west of Tchakkah, and conducts them to the Abi or Nile of Bruce. All streams to the east of Tchakkah descend precipitously to join the Hawash. The Barissa derives its name from having been, previous to the reign of the present Negoos, the

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"boundary" between the Gallas and the Christian inhabitants of Shoa. It passes to the west of Debra Berhan, flowing towards the north, and joins the Jumma in the district of Marabetee. The Jumma also receives the Tcherkos river, or Lomee wans, which is now the western boundary of the kingdom of Shoa, the district intervening between it and the Barissa, a distance of about sixteen miles, having been annexed to his dominions within the last few years by Sahale Selasse. The Jumma, after receiving the Barissa, and other streams, of the kingdoms of Amhara and of Shoa, joins the Abi near where that river, after flowing to the south from Lake Dembea, turns suddenly to the west, and forms the southern border of the province of Gogam.

We arrived at Angolahlah before noon, and Walderheros took me to the house of a friend of his, named Karissa. The weather, although only the latter end of June, was dreadfully cold, and being very tired and ill, I preferred rolling myself immediately up in my bed-clothes, consisting of two Abyssinian tobes, which my servant had carried with him in a skin-bag, rather than sit up to eat of some hard parched corn which was set before me by one of the women of the house.

In the mean time, Walderheros went to the palace to announce my arrival, and to request an interview with the Negoos. It was a long time before he returned, and I began to think, that like

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Mr. Krapf's servant at Farree, he might have been imprisoned for aiding me in coming to Angolalah without permission. In about two hours, however, he made his appearance, bearing on his head a large conical covered straw basket, which contained a flat loaf of excellent wheaten bread. With one hand he steadied this load in its elevated position, whilst in the other, he carried by a strong loop handle of rope, a round earthenware pot, the contents of which were as yet a secret to me. Across one shoulder was also slung an enormous bullock's horn, the diameter of the base of which was not less than seven inches, full of an agreeable sweet wine, called "tedge," made of honey, and not at all a bad beverage. I was astonished at the ease with which he seemed to have procured these provisions; and the visions of my Dankalli servant in Adal and the representation I had seen of the Egyptian god, Harpocrates, similarly burdened, recurred to my mind, as the abundance of the land I was in, was illustrated by the appearance of Walderheros on his return from the palace. Besides the refreshments that he bore himself, he was followed by a stream of people, two of them carrying a tressel for my bed, another an oxskin to throw over it, then came others with fire-wood, also two women with large jars of water, and the procession closed by four men bearing a small black tent of coarse woollen cloth, which was set up in a very short time, for my accommodation.

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When I had taken possession of my new quarters, the tent was thronged for the rest of the day by curious or busy people, some bearing messages for Walderheros from the palace; others, making anxious inquiries as to my reasons for coming to Angolalah; and not a few were begging of me to intercede for them with the Negoos, to reinstate them into his good graces, which, for some dereliction of duty it seemed, they had lost; and now hoped that by my mediation their sins would be forgiven. Two superior officers of the household of the Negoos, also sat with me nearly the whole day, Waarkie, an Armenian, long resident in Shoa, and Sartwold the chief of the "affaroitsh," or distributors of the rations to stranger guests. The former understood a little Arabic, and we managed to converse together very well. He told me, that instead of my being sent out of the kingdom, he was quite certain I should become a great favourite with the Negoos. The order sent for my removal from Aliu Amba, was occasioned by the ill-natured un-English representations of the officers of the Embassy who had told Waarkie himself, that I did not belong to their party, that they did not know who I was, and adding, to assist me still more, that I was very poor, and could give no presents to the Negoos. I felt very much hurt, and annoyed, at these unfair representations, and produced a letter which I had received from the Indian Government in Calcutta, addressed to the

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princes in Africa, who were friendly disposed to England. This I had previously kept back from a feeling of delicacy towards our representative at the Court of Shoa, but now determined to forward it to the Negoos by Sartwold, who readily consented to carry it up to the palace, Walderheros accompanying him to bring me back the answer. Waarkie, who could not read the Persian character, in which the letter was written, went in search of some Islam visitor at Court, who would be able to translate it for the Negoos.

As evening now closed in, I retired to rest; sometime after which my servant returned with the letter, and a couple of lemons sent by the Negoos, with a message that I should be called on the morrow to an interview with him.

Long before it was light, I was awakened by loud shouts of "abiad," "abiad," raised at short intervals, and apparently at some distance. On applying to Walderheros for an explanation of this uproar, he made me understand with some difficulty, that it arose from the petitioners for justice, calling upon the Negoos to hear them. It appears that after a case has been heard in the lower courts, if they may be so called, held before the governors of the town in which the conflicting parties reside, if either complain of his decision, an appeal may be made to the king himself. A company of the friends of the dissatisfied assemble, in as great a number as the influence of the party

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or the justice of the case can collect. These sometimes, so early as midnight, take up a position on a height overlooking the town, and opposite to that on which the palace stands. Half-a-mile, at least, intervenes between the two places. Here they keep up a continual shouting "abiad," "abiad," (justice,) until a messenger from the Negoos comes to know the nature of their complaint, and to introduce them into his presence. On this occasion, I did not understand sufficient of the language to learn the particulars of the case, but as the Negoos is the most easily accessible, the most patient listener, and the most upright judge that I ever heard praised by word of mouth, or read of among the most laudatory history of kings, I have no doubt that the cry of his people that awoke me this morning was duly attended to, the case investigated, and the strictest justice awarded.

The Dankalli may well style Sahale Selassee, "a fine balance of gold," for even now, when thinking of his character, the most lively pictures recur to my mind of instances of his kindness and feeling for the happiness of his subjects, which I have witnessed myself. Excepting the cruelty, and dissimulation, practised towards the unfortunate tribes of Gallas who surround his dominions, and which he has been taught to consider from his childhood, to be praiseworthy acts, which will secure the approbation of God; excepting this, nothing in his character can, I think, be justly

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assailed. The fears of his Christian, and the hopes of his Islam subjects, that he would renounce the faith in which he has been brought up, and profess Islamism, redounds considerably to his character as a reflecting man, and a proof of the really capacious mind he possesses; for none who are aware of the gross superstition and confusion most confused, of the tenets of the Greek Church as professed in Abyssinia, can feel surprised that a naturally sagacious mind, should refuse the trammels of absurdity and error, to embrace the reasonable simplicity of the profession of one true and only God, which is the real basis and great recommendation of the Mahomedan belief.

It is the false consolation of an easily-satisfied Christianity to believe, that the licentiousness, which an abuse of the Mahomedan religion most certainly encourages, is the chief inducement which converts so rapidly, whole states to the profession of the Islam faith. A little observation soon proves, that although the sensual indulgences it sanctions, and the promises contained in the Koran, enlist the worst passions of man in favour of its continuance, when once that religion has obtained a firm hold upon the opinion of a people; still, that these causes have but little influence in effecting a change from a previous belief.

Wherever a patriarchal, or even a feudal government exists, there the mass of the people are directed in their conduct, and in their ideas of

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right and wrong, entirely by the leading minds that circumstances have made their superiors. The doctrine that "the king can do no wrong," appears to be a traditional continuance of this blind confidence in the ruling powers which characterized the state of society in Europe, at an early date; and which is still, to this day, the universal principle of government in all native African states. In that Continent, sagacious and intelligent princes, concentrate the energies of extensive empires, but at their decease, revolutions occur to re-adjust the limits of power again, according to the capabilities of the various ambitious claimants that may spring up. The greatest minds obtain the largest dominion, and when these appear among the professors of superstitious religions, soon feel a contempt for the absurd pretensions and the moral falsehoods their superior mental powers instinctively detect. Too frequently, having no idea of a rational system of theology, but aware of the value of religion as an engine of state policy, they wisely profess and encourage the ancient faith. Let, however, a doctrine be preached that is more adapted to reason and common sense, and which promises equal security to the continuance of social order and of kingly rule: its professors in that case are always found to be received into the highest favour by wise and sagacious princes, who perceive in the new opinions upon an important subject, that satisfaction of the reason which the absurd representa-

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tions of superstitious religion have only disgusted or amused. Such princes converted to a rational belief, have but to promulgate their adhesion to be followed by the whole of their courtiers, who again impose it upon their dependants, from whom the process passes on to their slaves, and one universal obsequiousness characterizes the conversion of people so situated.

This was the principle that led whole states of Europe, in the earlier feudal ages, to be baptized together, and which, at the present time, is the chief cause of the fast progress of Mahomedanism in Africa. Princes of extraordinary powers of intellect are first converted, who, in the simple unembodied unity of the Deity perceive no absurdity, nor yet dare to deny. Atheism is a sin peculiarly of civilization, for the nearer man approaches barbarism the more predisposed he becomes to a belief in a Providence; and this, in fact, distinguishes him, in his most abject state, from the beasts of the field who defile the inanimate idols he in his ignorance bows down to and worships. The Christianity of Abyssinia is a religion spoiled by human intervention; it appears to be a faith too pure for the nature of the inhabitants, and they have accordingly disfigured it to reduce it to their condition. Abyssinians have, by their abuse of the revered name of the Redeemer of mankind, brought his religion into contempt; whilst the professors of Islamism respect Jesus as a prophet, and profess to

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worship the Deity he adored. Is it, therefore, to be wondered at, that princes of superior intellects should reject the former and adopt the latter faith, as we know to have been the case with the previously Christian King of Enarea, who, within the last few years, has professed the Mahomedan belief. Sahale Selassee, the monarch of Shoa, universally acknowledged to be the greatest of Abyssinian potentates, was on the verge of a similar repudiation of the religion of his predecessors, when the worthy and exemplary missionaries, Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf appeared in his country. I am too apt to feel the zealot, but every one must admit with me, that that important visit was not a human ordination, for Sahale Selassee's conversion would have been the downfall of the Christian religion in Abyssinia. Even the political mission to Shoa, which has failed in its proposed objects, yet affords some consolation by supposing that the evidences of our wealth and power, demonstrated by the presents which were laid at his feet by our representative, will confirm him in his renewed attachment to our religion, which only requires his countenance, to contend successfully in Abyssinia against the encroachments of the Islam faith, until fresh efforts shall be made by the friends of the Gospel in this country, more firmly to establish the pure faith of Christ in that *benighted* land.

Among more savage tribes, again, Islamism has other recommendations, for the missionaries of that

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religion, the merchants from the sea-coast who journey into the interior of Africa, are immeasurably more affluent than the chiefs whose territories they visit. Besides, the imposing effect of publicly praying, the apparent devotion of their many genuflections and prostrations, the splendid finery of their large rosaries, added to which, their great ostentation of wealth where personal security is assured, soon influence the poor, ignorant, and wondering natives. The Islam factor is confessedly the greatest man among them; and his manners are copied, and his creed adopted, by the operation of the same human feelings, which in England or France make a *lion* or constitute a fashion, with this recommendation on the part of the savages, that their admiration is by far the most permanent.

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CHAPTER IX.

Court dress.—Palace of Angolahlah.—Interview with Negoos.—Memolagee.—Invited to house of Tinta.—Supplies from palace.—Return to Ankobar.

June 30*th.*—This morning, after a breakfast of bread and cayenne pottage, which proved to be the contents of the little earthenware jar carried back from the palace the day before, I was sent for, to present myself immediately before the Negoos. Understanding that it was etiquette to appear before royalty either with the upper part of the body, above the waist, quite naked, or else, on the contrary, closely clothed up, I chose the latter alternative, and put over my blowse dress my black Arab cloak, and following the messenger, walked up the side of the low hill upon which the Palace of Angolahlah stands. This ridge, scarcely one hundred feet high, is a red ferruginous basaltic dyke, which has here protruded through the general surface rock of grey columnar porphyry. The rock of which it consists contains so much iron as to render the compass completely useless in taking bearings, and the oxidization, where it is

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exposed to the action of the atmosphere, occasions the bright red colour of the hill. The circumscribed, but nearly level summit, is occupied by the several courts of the royal residence, the palace buildings, long thatched houses, standing in the centre of all.

An irregular stockade of splintered *ted* (a juniper pine), twelve or fourteen feet high, is carried around the edge of the ridge, and the enclosed area, in its longest direction, exceeds three hundred yards. This is subdivided into courts, the first of which is entered from the town by a low gateway that scarcely affords passage to a person mounted upon a mule, although it is a privilege of the principal courtiers to ride so far before they dismount, when they visit the Negoos.

Through this court we passed, for about twenty yards, between two rows of noisy beggars, male and female, old, middle-aged, and young; who, leprous, scrofulous, and maimed, exhibited the most disgusting sores, and implored charity for the sake of Christ and the Virgin Mary. I was glad to escape from their piteous importunity, and I passed quickly through another row of palings by a narrow wicket into a second court, something more extensive than the other, where I found a crowd of people listening to an orator, who, with shoulders and body bare to his middle, was addressing three or four turbaned monks who sat in an open alcove, beneath the long projecting eaves of a thatched

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roof. This I was given to understand by Walderheros, who followed close behind me, was a court of justice, from whose decision, if the parties did not feel satisfied, they appealed to the King. As we passed through a third wicket, a small enclosure on one side attracted my attention, from the circumstance of several prisoners, shackled by the wrists and ancles with bright and apparently much-worn fetters, endeavouring to get a peep at me through the interstices of their wooden prison. In the next court was collected a great heap of stones, upon which a number of people were sitting; and here also I was desired to be seated, as I found out, among the noblemen of the country; for at first I objected to such a lowly couch, until I saw the Wallasmah, whom I knew to be the most powerful of any of the subjects of Sahale Selassee, sitting very contented, wrapt up in his white tobe, his black bald head, little eyes and snub nose, alone appearing from above its ample folds. There were many others of nearly equal rank, who were waiting to see the Negoos; so choosing the sunniest spot unoccupied, did in Shoa as I saw the Shoans do, and sat down with the rest upon the hard stones.

I had scarcely comported myself so unassumingly when its due reward followed, by being summoned immediately afterwards into the presence of the Negoos. I found his majesty in the next court, which was nearly circular, and surrounded by a low stone wall instead of the high, ragged palisades, that

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three times before fence his retreat about. Several long low houses stood around, serving as stores and offices, and conspicuous among them was the little round cottage, about twenty-two feet in diameter, that was then being erected by Capt. Graham. One of the thatched houses was raised to a second story, open in front, each side of which was ornamented with trellicework of very rude carpentry. In this elevated alcove, upon a couch, covered with red velvet, and reposing upon large cushions of yellow-coloured satin lay the Negoos of Shoa, Sahale Selassee, whilst many-coloured Persian carpets covered the floor, and hung over outside into the court.

I uncovered my head after the most approved court fashion, at least as far as I knew anything of the matter, but a slight movement of the considerate monarch instructed me that he desired I should keep my cap on whilst standing in the sun, addressing me at the same time by an Arabic expression, signifying "How do you do."

This mode of commencing the conversation rather puzzled me, for simple as was the salutation, I had forgotten the meaning of "*kiphanter*," and fancying it to be some Amharic word, turned for assistance to Walderheros, who, however, dropped his nether jaw, and looked a vacant "I don't know; don't ask me." Waarkie, who stood with numerous other courtiers around the royal couch, came to the edge of the stage, and repeated the word, upon which, recol-

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lecting myself, I bowed in return, and taking out my letter I had received in Calcutta, held it up for Waarkie to take it, and hand to the Negoos, as I hoped from his being so conversant with Arabic, he might be able to decipher it without the aid of an interpreter. This, however, I soon saw he could not do, for upon looking at it, not being able to make anything of it the right way, he turned it upside down, to see if it would read any easier in that position. Two mollums, or learned Mahomedan scribes, attendants of the Wallasmah Mahomed, were now summoned, but they soon confessed themselves at fault with the Persian character. Very fortunately for my reputation, a large round Government seal occupied one-third of the paper, and some of the characters upon it being recognised as Arabic, the document at length was reported to be genuine, or I should have been set down as an impostor as well as an adventurer. The seal having thus impressed them with the official character of the letter, the mollums satisfied the King that they could make out that I was represented in it to be a good man, and after one of them had been instructed to ask me what presents I had brought for the Negoos, they were ordered to depart.

Having understood from the members of the Mission, on my first arrival, that it was an invariable custom, on introduction to the monarch, to make him some present, I had accordingly provided

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myself with a few yards of rich Chinese silk velvet, and a curiously-worked bead purse, which contained a stone ring, cut out of a piece of green-coloured jaspar. Each was handed up in succession to the Negoos for his inspection; after having been duly described and registered upon a strip of parchment by a scribe who stood at my elbow for that purpose. As each was presented, the Negoos slightly bowed, and said, in his own language, "*Egzeer ista*" (God return it to you).

A short conversation with his courtiers, who stood with the upper parts of the body completely uncovered, was followed by a request on the part of the Negoos, that I should ask from him whatever I desired. I begged to be allowed to remain in Shoa until after the rains, and then to have permission and his assistance to proceed to Enarea. A slight inclination of assent, with an abrupt recommendation of me to the care of heaven by his majesty, terminated the interview, and I retired, followed by Walderheros, who appeared highly delighted with the graciousness of my reception, and was evidently speculating upon the bright prospects before him from the opportunities I might have of pushing his fortunes at court, for the precincts of which he seemed to have a great predilection.

Immediately after returning to my tent, a large goat was sent to me by the Negoos, and an inconvenient command that I should remain for the day at Angolahlah. There was nothing that I desired

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less, for the cold weather, the thin shelter of the tent, and my expected attack of the fever paroxysm on this day, made me anxious to proceed at once, after my visit to the palace, to my comparatively comfortable quarters in Aliu Amba, where the climate was so much more temperate and agreeable. I sent Walderheros to report the circumstance of my being very ill, and he fortunately met Tinta, who was coming down to see me, having been appointed to act as my "balderabah." This is an officer who attends to the wants of a stranger guest, and is responsible to the Negoos for any neglect of the duties of hospitality. He also is the channel of communication between the monarch and his visitors, nor can any other person of the royal household undertake the duties of, or become the deputy of another in this office, so that it not unfrequently happens that an inconvenient detention in one of the courts of the palace takes place, if the balderabah happens not to be present to announce to the Negoos the presence or the business of his client. As the balderabah is always chosen from among the principal men about the court, the office is somewhat analogous to that of the patrons which characterized the state of society among the ancient Romans. The signification of the name "balderabah," in the Amharic language is, the master or opener of the door.

Tinta came down, and after announcing to me that I had permission to remain in his town, and

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that he was appointed my "friend at court," gave into my hand a little piece of parchment, about an inch and a half square upon which was written in the Geez language, "Give to this Gypt, eating and drinking," nothing more, but which constituted me a "*balla durgo*," that is, master or receiver of rations. "Gypt," the Amharic for Egyptian, is the cognomen generally applied to all white men who visit Abyssinia, they being supposed to come from Egypt.*

The durgo, or rations, supplied to strangers whilst resident in their country, is a general custom among Abyssinian princes, and is of very great antiquity. It is considered that all persons visiting the kingdom come only as friends of the monarch, who, in the exercise of his hospitality, takes upon himself the whole expense of their sustenance, so that no excuse may be made for intriguing or interfering in the ordered state of things, as regards the rule or security of the kingly power. A deviation

* It is rather a singular circumstance that in England we apply the term Gipsey to the descendants of an outcast people, and that a name of similar origin should designate ourselves among the only remnant of an Egyptian people that have preserved a national independency in the country whither they had fled. It reminded me of another ethnological fact I had observed in Aden, where the flaxen-haired, light-coloured Jews, so different in appearance from the darker complexioned Arabs among whom they lived, were oppositely contrasted with those dark-eyed, dark-haired descendants of Israel, who have retained these characteristics of an eastern origin, although long resident among the fair-skinned inhabitants of northern Europe.

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from the policy of non-interference on the part of the guest would then be justly considered an act of great ingratitude; nor when such a conservative principle is involved in the observance of hospitality towards strangers, can we be surprised at the indignation which marks several tirades in the productions of the ancient poets, when this custom was more general than in modern times, against individuals who have thus erred in their duties to the hosts who have entertained them.

Moreover, when departing from an Abyssinian country, the audience of leave-taking is supposed to terminate with a blessing bestowed upon the king by the guest, who acknowledges in this manner the kindness with which he has been received. The blessing being withheld implies the reverse, and no little uneasiness and superstitious alarm would be occasioned in the mind of a monarch, by the idea that the stranger would revenge himself by a curse, for any neglect he may suppose himself to have been treated with.

These customs being borne in mind, to apply our knowledge of them usefully, we must compare them with similar observances which did, and still do, characterize some oriental courts; and readers perhaps will recall to mind some in the histories of ancient and modern Asiatic monarchies, that may have originated from some former connexion in one extensive empire, of the now very different and widely separated countries in which such customs

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are still retained. I shall content myself, however, with pointing out their strict accordance with similar usages at the court of Pharaoh, as recorded in Genesis, and which is well illustrated in the reception of the patriarch Jacob, at the court of that monarch. In the forty-seventh chapter of that book, Joseph from his connexion with the monarch, introduces his five brethren, but he first reports their arrival and obtains leave; and in nearly the same manner he acts as balderabah of Jacob, and the remainder of the family whom we find on their arrival were constituted *balla-durgoitsh* "receivers of rations," for we read in the same chapter that Joseph "nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread according to their families." We are also told when Jacob retired from the presence of the monarch, "that Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh."

At the hazard of being considered tedious, I shall here allude to two other instances of customs existing at the present day in Abyssinia, and which are intimately connected with the subject we are upon. The only public oath used by the inhabitants of Shoa, is of a remarkable character. "Sahale Selassee e moot." 'May Sahale Selassee die,' if such a thing be not true! is the constant ejaculation of a protesting witness, or a positive informant; and if upon a serious business, the immediate confiscation of property, and incarceration in

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prison, would be consequent upon a perjured imprecation made against the life of the Negoos. Jospeh, accusing his brethren, in the fifteenth verse of the forty-second chapter of Genesis, says, "Hereby shall ye be proved: *By the life of Pharaoh* ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither;" and again, in the next verse, "or else *by the life of Pharaoh* surely ye are spies." The very language substituting the name Sahale Selassee for that of Pharaoh, under similar circumstances, which would be used in the court of Shoa at the present day.

In the years 1830 and 1831, when cholera made its circuit of the whole earth, it visited the kingdom of Shoa. It was preceded for two successive years by a great failure of crops, both of grain and cotton, and the people in consequence, were reduced to the greatest extremity for food and clothing. Numbers fell victims from hunger alone, and to relieve their necessities, numerous acts of violence and robbery disturbed the usually peaceful state of society in Shoa. The Negoos, at this time, secured to himself the love of his subjects by the liberality of his frequent distributions of grain; but another calamity made its appearance, the cholera commenced its ravages, and he began to fear that his bounty must end by the exhaustion of his means. The famine increasing from want of the cattle which had died, to cultivate the land, the difficulty of obtaining food began also to be felt

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by those who had the means of purchasing it, and these intruding with their applications were supplied at a price, whilst the wretched poor were left to die. In this position, having nothing to dispose of but their labour, a starving multitude of some thousands appealed to the Negoos to grant them food, and in return to receive their freedom, or at least their services for life. This was granted, and even after the cholera had swept off nearly two-thirds of their number, above a thousand such individuals were found to be in bondage to the Negoos, and duly registered as slaves. This condition was certainly little more than nominal, for, except upon extraordinary occasions, such as constructing the bridge dams over the streams on the roads to Angolahlah, and to Debra Berhan, or when employed building stone enclosures for the Negoos, a service scarcely ever exceeding three days in three months, this class of slaves were never called upon for regular or long-continued labour.

In the course of the ten succeeding years, however, children were born to these people, and the question then arose, as to whether they shared the bondage of their parents, or were free. This was brought to issue by the Negoos bestowing certain lands, upon which were domiciled several of these bondsmen, upon a courtier, who made a demand of service from the children, which the parents refused to admit as his right, and an appeal was made to the Negoos in consequence. The court of

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"*Wombaroitsh*," or judges of an inferior kind, who relieve the king of all first hearings of cases, except in most important ones, and who sit in judgment in one of the courts of the palace, decided in favour of the children; but this decision, on an appeal by the courtier, was negatived by the Negoos himself, without any hearing of those unfortunates who were most interested. The "*Wombaroitsh*" put in a plea, however, founded upon the canons of their Church, and the numerous solicitations of the free relations of the bondpeople, induced the Negoos to acknowledge himself to have been in error, and to proclaim that the people alone, whom he had fed and clothed in the time of the famine, were his slaves for life, and that their children for the future must be considered free.

These circumstances I became acquainted with in consequence of having the daughter of one of these very bondsmen in my service, and who was old enough, at the time of the famine, to recollect the sad miseries that fell upon her own family during its continuance, until her father and two brothers sold themselves for their food, in the manner I have above related, to the future service of the Negoos.

Among others who addressed the Negoos in favour of the children, whose numbers amounted to scarcely more than five hundred, were the officers of the British Mission, a fact, however, of which I never heard until my arrival in this country, nor is it, I am afraid, very generally

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known to have been the case by the inhabitants of Shoa, who have no other idea but that it was the effect of religious feeling, and of the great sense of justice, for which their sovereign, Sahale Selassee, is celebrated all over the eastern horn of Africa, and far into the interior towards the west.

I was never given to understand that the proclamation that announced the freedom of the children at all affected the condition of their parents, who, I believe, still are and will continue until death the bond servants of the Negoos.

When these circumstances were first related to me, I could not help being struck by the exact correspondence they exhibit, with the proceedings of Joseph acting as the steward of Pharaoh towards the starving Egyptians, during the infliction of the seven years' famine upon that country; and which is another instance of the similarity of custom and of situation between that ancient people and the modern Abyssinians. The appeal, indeed, of the former to Joseph, expresses exactly the request made to the Negoos of Shoa by his subjects; "Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and the land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh, and give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land be not desolate."

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CHAPTER X.

Stay with Tinta—Proceed to Ankobar.—Remain for the day at Musculo's house.—Fever.—Abyssinian supper party.—Honey wine.—Importance of salt as an article of food.

WHEN my "balderabah" Tinta, gave to Walderheros the parchment order for durgo, he also told him, as the tent was insufficient shelter for an invalid, to take me to his house, which was not many yards distant from where I was previously lodged.

Here we found his mother and sister sitting upon the ground busy spinning cotton. The right thighs of each were completely bare to the hips, for the purpose of rolling swiftly with the palm of the hand, along the smooth surface, the small light reel, which hung revolving, whilst the hand bearing aloft the light white cloud of cotton, slowly diverged to arms' length, and the other as gradually drew out in the opposite direction the slender thread that was formed during the operation.

Within the hearth circle, that occupied the centre of the apartment, a huge wood fire was blazing away, the most comfortable looking thing I had seen since leaving Aliu Amba. On the farther side from the door was a raised couch, built

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of stones and mud, and upon this a layer of fresh cut grass was laid, and an ox skin was soon found to throw over this dampish looking bed. All being arranged, I was invited to sit down, my shoes and socks being then taken off, the older lady, in accordance with a very usual custom, washed my feet in warm water, and I had already become so used to their manners, that I did not now draw back the foot, as at first I could not help doing, from the salute that is always given when the process is concluded.

Besides the goat which the Negoos had sent to me, another supply of bread (like our own), butter, cayenne pottage, and tedge, arrived towards the evening, and although I was not able to enjoy the good things myself, the family and Walderheros fared sumptuously upon the viands thus abundantly provided.

After sunset our party was joined by Tinta himself, who had been detained during the day on duty at the palace. He brought with him the "ullica" of the "affaroitsh," or superior of the distributors of the rations, named Sartawold, "The gift of the Son." He was a regular smooth-faced courtier, sleek and well fed, very quiet, and very cunning. A conversation, not an extremely interesting one, was kept up by means of an Islam inhabitant of Aliu Amba, who had arrived in Angolahlah during the day, and upon the strength of having seen me in the market of the former

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town, had now called to make inquiries after the health of his old friend and intimate acquaintance, the "Aliu Amba ahkeem."

Among the things Sartawold wanted, was some medicine for the Negoos, whom he did not hesitate to assert, had a most disreputable complaint; but as I did not think proper to understand him until I knew something more of the particulars of the case, he soon ceased making the request. Our halting conversation terminated at length by his getting up from the floor, where he had been sitting upon an ox hide, and telling me that the King desired me to remain at Aliu Amba till I was quite well, and, in the meantime, I must learn to speak Amharic. After recommending each other a dozen times to the care of heaven, Sartawold retired, but it was some time before I could get the talkative Islam to leave me to my much-required repose.

After an early breakfast next morning, Walderheros prepared for our departure, rolling up my plaid, Arab cloak, and two large Abyssinian tobes that formed my bed clothes, and putting them all into a large goat skin bag, in which they were usually carried on occasions of leaving home for a time.

I presented my female friends with a few small strings of blue and gold coloured beads, which are the kind most preferred by the Christian inhabitants of Shoa. Of these beads they construct the

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more superior kind of "martab," the particular symbol of their faith; which, of some material or other, they invariably wear. It sometimes consists merely of a white or blue thread, tied around the throat, but those in most general use are made of dark blue silk, imported by the merchants of Giddem and of Hurrah. This colour, once universally worn, is not insisted upon at the present day, for although it still continues to be considered the most orthodox, the white and yellow coloured threads of beads have become very fashionable of late. The custom of wearing coloured "martabs" bears some reference, I believe, to a personal distinction between the Christian and Islam faiths, established by some former Negoos; for red head dresses of cotton cloth, and long red gowns, are invariably the "outward and visible" sign of the profession of Islamism, among the women of Efat, and other Mahomedan provinces, as the blue martab is of the Christian population.

It was nine o'clock before we were fairly started, but we soon lost sight of the palace hill, with its crest of thatched roofs appearing above the bristling stockade; and of its red flanks dotted with squatting noblemen and courtiers, who in clean white tobes sat enjoying the fresh air and the genial influence of a morning sun. Walderheros ran by the side of my mule, poising upon his head the skin bag which contained my bed. When, however, the view of Angolahlah was shut out by

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the projecting shoulder of a low ridge, along the base of which our road lay, his burden was transferred to the crupper of my saddle, and relieving me of my carabine, the respectful bearing of a servant was changed for the familiarity of a tutor. and one long lesson in Amharic again occupied the way.

We reached Ankobar late in the afternoon, and as I was completely worn out, and the mule was tired also, I agreed to the proposal of Walderheros that we should stay for the night at the house of a married sister of his, the husband of whom was the "ullica," or the superior of those slaves of the Negoos, whose duty it is to cut and carry wood for the use of the royal residences.

The house was very conveniently situated at the junction of the lower road, around the base of the ridge of Ankobar, with the steep ascending one that leads to the town on its summit.

Walderheros found his sister at home, with a fat slave-girl, Mahriam, as her attendant and companion. Musculo, the husband, was absent upon some duty, but he appeared in the course of the afternoon, and all endeavoured to make me as comfortable as they could.

Their house was of the better sort, built of splinted ted, and consisted of a central apartment, with recesses formed by the division of the space between two circular walls, which were placed at about four feet distant from each other. In one of these

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recesses was placed a bed-stead, covered with an ox skin tanned with the bark of the kantuffa, which gives to this kind of leather a red colour. A skin so prepared is called "*net.*" The kantuffa is a pleasing looking tree, and might be cultivated as a lawn shrub in England. It is a species of acacia, and the bright red seed vessels formed like those of the English ash, remaining after the foliage disappears, would diminish considerably, I think, the dreary aspect of a shrubbery in that season.

In the other two recesses were numerous jars containing ale, grain, and water, and side by side stood four pedestal hand mills, in the rear of which a hole, knocked through the mud and stick wall, served the double purpose of a window and chimney. The large circular hearth occupied the usual situation, nearly in the centre of the apartment, which was itself not more than twelve feet in diameter. Two solid planks of the "*sigbar*" tree, each of which had been cut with no little labour from a single tree, formed a pair of folding-doors. The hinges on which they revolved consisted of strong projecting extremities on one side of the top and bottom of each, which were received into corresponding holes on the wooden lintel and threshold. At night the two flaps were secured by an iron hasp shutting upon a staple, that admitted a kind of wooden linch-pin to be thrust through.

The *sigbar* tree, of which these doors were made, is the principal forest-tree of Shoa, it some-

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times attains the height of one hundred feet, with a diameter of not less than five feet. In flocks along its crushing branches, the flying "*gurazo*," a species of monkey, makes the circuit of the forest, and to watch them, as they take the most fearful leaps from tree to tree, is most interesting. I have seen the dam, with a young one held tightly to her breast with one arm, exactly like a human being would do, fearlessly dart from the greatest height to the lower branch of a neighbouring tree, and quickly gaining its summit, keep well up with the rest, in their leaping progress.

Musculo being the "ullica," or superior of the wood-cutting slaves, I requested him to bring some of the people of all the country to the south of Shoa, that I might have the opportunity of examining them. Whilst he was away, however, my fever fit recurred, and I was under the agreeable influence of a warm water emetic when he returned with a large company of his charge. There were Shankalli negroes from the extreme south and west, and Gallas from the intermediate countries, red Gurague people, and the bilious-coloured, from Zingero and Enarea—all stood or sat around the door-way, and I could have wished to have transferred the whole lot to some ethnological museum, to relieve me just at that moment from taking notes. In fact it was impossible, and so ordering Walderheros to give them two ahmulahs to purchase some ale for their evening's

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entertainment, I dismissed the chattering crowd until another day, when more favourable circumstances would admit of my making particular inquiries respecting their families, their nations, and their tongues, sharpened as my appetite for such information was by the clear idea of the character of the country I had already received from the dealer Ibrahim, and which I wished to confirm by actual conversations with the natives of the various countries, he had spoken of in his geography of Southern Abyssinia.

Warm water, as an emetic in the first stage of an ague, materially diminishes its violence, and although I do not recommend it altogether as a cure, I am bound to speak well of it as a palliative. At night I recommend also to a patient, situated as I was, to take doses of from twelve to fourteen grains of Dover's powders. It is better, however, to compound this excellent febrifuge with sulphate of magnesia, rather than the usual salt, sulphate of potass, and that for reasons which are obvious.

One effect of the opium which is not sufficiently insisted upon by practisers of medicine is its specific effect upon the brain as a tonic. In small doses at bed-time I found it invaluable, as decreasing that congestion in the blood-vessels of the head which attends the paroxysms of ague, and which adds considerably to the severity of the attack. In a severe sun-stroke from which I also suffered, I found abstinence from food and small doses of opium at night relieved me of all bad symptoms

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in the course of three or four days. Experience has taught me these important facts, but as future travellers cannot be supposed to have my note books with them, I have recorded these hints for their benefit.

After the reaction following the hot stage of the fever, I felt quite certain a horn or two of "tedge" honey wine would not do me any injury, so sent Walderheros just before sunset to endeavour to procure me some. I also gave Musculo a salt piece to purchase fowls and ale, as my contribution towards the entertainment, Walderheros and myself were receiving in the house.

My servant soon breasted the high hill, and fortunately was just in time to find a person in authority, who, immediately he was shown my durgo order, procured a large bullock's horn full of the sweet wine. The manufacture of tedge or honey wine is a royal monopoly, and is not publicly sold; of course there is a kind of conventional license, not exactly smuggling, by which, for double or treble its value, this beverage may be obtained. Even then the purchased article is probably the rations that have been preserved by some carefully disposed guest of the monarch, who, pouring his daily allowance of a bullock's hornfull into a large jar, collects a stock for a day of rejoicing or for private sale. The process of brewing tedge is simple enough; cold water being poured over a few small drinking hornsfull of honey placed in a jar, is well stirred up; to this is then added

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a handful of sprouted barley, "biccalo," scorched over the fire, and ground into a coarse meal, with the same quantity of the leaves of the "gaisho," a species of Rhamneæ, not unlike the common tea plant, and an intense but transient bitter like gentian or hops. The mixture being allowed to stand for three or four days, ferments, and is generally drunk in that state, but is then rather a queer kind of muddy beverage, full of little flocculent pieces of wax. It is more agreeable, but not unlike, in appearance or character, very strong sweet-wort. To a superior kind, made for the King's own table, besides the "biccalo" and "gaisho," is also added a kind of berry called "kuloh," which grows not unlike the fruit of our elderberry, and may possibly be the production of some tree belonging to that species. The jars containing this are sealed with a large cake of clay mixed with the lees of the decanted liquor. This kind of tedge is allowed to stand for several months before it is used, and is called "barilla," from always being handed to guests in small Venetian bottles of green glass, the fracture of one of which is a grievous offence with his Shoan Majesty, and he always makes the careless party pay for it.

Two hours after sunset I was well enough to sit up and partake of my tedge, which was handed to me by Walderheros, to amuse myself with whilst he proceeded to lay out our supper. A large round table of wicker-work, the diameter of which

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was about three feet, and about one foot in height, was reached down from a peg, where it had been suspended against the wall, and laid upon the floor before me. In the centre of this, Eichess, the lady of the house, placed a round saucer-like dish of red earthenware, full of the cayenne pottage, which had been long preparing upon the fire, and in which were boiled to a hot fricassee the disjointed limbs of a fowl. A separate heap of three or four of the thin teff crumpets, folded four-fold, was then put for each person.

Walderheros, for a few beads, had purchased at the palace about a yard of yellow wax taper, which was merely a long rag dipped into the melted material. Having cut off and lighted a portion of this, he carried it flaring about in his left hand, as he assisted most busily in the arrangement of the supper things. Musculo, not to be idle, had seated himself upon one corner of the bed I occupied, and with the bullock's horn upon his knee occasionally replenished my drinking horn, and as frequently assisted me in finishing its contents.

Everything at length being pronounced ready, I was requested to take my seat at the table, a boss of straw being placed for my accommodation. I, however, preferred remaining on the bed, watching their whole proceedings for want of other amusement. The company, who soon seated themselves, consisted of Eichess, Mahriam, Walderheros, Musculo, and a younger brother of the latter, named

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Abta Mahriam, one of the King's gunmen, who had come in during the preparation of the meal. Musculo took the straw seat, the rest squatted around the table upon their heels, and formed altogether a good picture of an Abyssinian family.

Eichess commenced by dipping several folds of the thin bread into the cayenne pottage until well saturated with the condiment. With a quantity of this she supplied each individual, taking for that purpose the topmost layer of the heap of bread assigned to them, which, after sopping, was returned to its previous situation. The party now proceeded on their own account, tearing off portions of the under bread, and wiping it upon the moistened morsel above, by the contact giving to it the required hot relish, in a manner somewhat analogous to our putting mustard upon meat.

The "wort," or cayenne pottage, may be termed the national dish of the Abyssinians, as that or its basis, "dillock," is invariably eaten with their ordinary diet, the thin crumpet-like bread of teff or wheat flour. Equal parts of salt and of the red cayenne pods are well powdered and mixed together with a little pea or bean meal to make a paste. This is called "dillock," and is made in quantities at a time, being preserved in a large gourd-shell, generally suspended from the roof. The "wort" is merely a little water added to this paste, which is then boiled over the fire, with the addition of a little fat meat and more meal, to

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make a kind of porridge, to which sometimes is also added several warm seeds, such as the common cress or black mustard, both of which are indigenous in Abyssinia. When unable to make the "wort," a little of the "dillock" is placed *en masse* upon the bread, which the eater endeavours to make go as far as possible by slight touches of each portion of the food he puts into his mouth.

Whilst speaking of this article of food, it may be as well to observe, that its use appears to have been dictated by the situation of the Abyssinians. As an easy illustration by analogy, it may be safely supposed that salt is a more indispensable necessary of life, and far more expensive in that country, than the purest white sugar is in Europe. Children stand around the mother whilst engaged in any manner in which salt is employed, as in England, little silent gazers are attracted around mamma when making sweetened dishes. Good housekeeping with the Abyssinians consists chiefly in the economical management of their stock of salt; and among other notable modes of making a little do duty for a considerable quantity, besides affording an additional stimulant to the palate, is this system of combining it with pepper.

An old Dutch method of executing criminals was confining them solely to the use of bread in which no salt was contained, and which ultimately occasioned death by the worms that were thus allowed to generate in the intestines. Many children in

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England have I seen who have certainly fallen victims to the foolish fear that they would eat too much salt; and I believe that disposition to scrofula, the national disease, is chiefly owing to the vegetable diet of our children not being sufficiently attended to in the matter of this simple condiment. Be that as it may, the Abyssinians suffer considerably in their health from the difficulty of obtaining salt. They are dreadfully subject to that species of *vermes*, called tapeworm, and every month are obliged to have recourse to a vile drastic cathartic called "cosso," to get rid of the unpleasant cause of this complaint, and all owing to the want of sufficient salt in their food. To this cause may be attributable also that tendency to form large spreading ulcers which the slightest bruise upon their bodies occasions; and the dreadful ravages which syphilis makes among them.

The supper grew gradually to a close, and as the viands disappeared, matter for conversation seemed to increase. As the appetites of the party were appeased, I noticed little choice bits of the fowl that remained at the bottom of the "wort" basin, were taken out by the fingers of the lady of the house, and being rolled up in a mass of bread, far too large for the mouth, were successively handed to all around. Each one as he received the compliment, slightly rising from the ground, kissed the joined wrists of his own hands, as he offered to support the hand of Eichess, whilst she held the morsel

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to the mouth, until it had entirely disappeared. Mahriam, the slave-girl, who sat with the rest, was not neglected, for a larger portion came to her share than to any of the others. Slaves generally are considered by their owners in the light of near relations, or rather, perhaps, as foster children. When their conduct is so very bad as to alienate the affection of their indulgent masters, they are not unfrequently dismissed. Latterly, however, a greater relaxation in the principles of the Christians of Shoa, as in other portions of Abyssinia, has led to a punishment for refractory slaves, by selling them to their Mahomedan neighbours, who soon forward them to the coast. Canon law prohibits this custom of selling slaves altogether, but a system of smuggling in this unhappy commodity is extensively carried on, by the very priests of the religion itself, who are continually bringing slave-children to Aliu Amba market from Gurague, and other Christian states to the south of Shoa.

The repast being concluded, all wiped their pottage-soiled fingers upon the last fragments of the bread, which were then duly swallowed. Mahriam now got up, and from out a gourd-shell poured a little water upon the hands of each of the party, who, rubbing the fingers together a little, then dried them upon their ample tobes. A gambo of strong ale called thalah, containing at least five gallons, was now opened, and deep horn cups were frequently replenished, whilst a lively conversation concerning the

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events of the last two or three days was kept up; a very highly-coloured account of my reception by the Negoos, no doubt, having been given by Walderheros, who, as principal speaker upon the occasion, was in the happiest mood possible, and though generally very careful of his tapers on other occasions, he found himself obliged to light the remaining half-yard, to afford him time to conclude his long narration.

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CHAPTER XI.

Leave Ankobar.— Arrive in Aliu Amba.—Musical party.—Durgo.—Arrangements with Tinta.—Remarks upon internal Government of Shoa.—The authority of Sehale Selassee. His virtues.

HAVING slept well during the night, in spite of the very numerous fleas, and similar trifling annoyances, to which I had become in some measure accustomed, as must every traveller in Abyssinia, I arose, like a giant refreshed; for one comfort, amidst all the disheartening circumstances that oppressed me was, that every other day was one of rest, on which I was, comparatively speaking, well. A few beads to Eichess and Mahriam, repaid them for their attention, and my mule being brought, before the sun had cast his first beams over the ridge in front of Ankobar, I was following Walderheros along a narrow winding lane, between high banks, on which grew the broad-leaved banana-like Ensete plant, and the thick coarse foliage of a dwarf tree called, "y' shokoko Gwomen," the rock rabbit cabbage. In a short time, we emerged into the regular road to Aliu Amba, called the lower road, in contradistinction to the

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one that leads through Ankobar above, and after an hour's ride, I arrived upon the market-place portion of the rock of Aliu Amba, long before Walderheros, but the mule took me direct to my old quarters at Miriam's house, along the labyrinth of lanes that would otherwise have sorely puzzled me. Here I was received by a crowd of women, who announced my arrival with a loud and long-continued cry of "La, La, La," a customary welcome, never omitted on the return home of any one who has been absent for a time. I subsequently observed, that the more chance there was of receiving an ahmulah to spend in ale afterwards, the more joyous was the cry, and more numerous was the assembly. Two native fiddlers also presented themselves, immediately that I had seated myself in the house, bringing with them their instruments, and a little doll dressed up to represent an Amhara soldier, with small but well-made models of spear, shield, and the peculiar crooked sword of the country.

Their fiddles were clumsy-looking affairs, consisting of a long handle, a lozenge-shaped parchment body, and one string formed of a loose bundle of horse-hairs, that at the upper extremity of the handle were secured to a moveable pin of wood three or four inches long, and after being carried over a bridge which stood upon one of the parchment faces, were looped down to a little projection beyond. The string thus formed, was

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tightened at pleasure, by simply twisting it upon the stick pin. The bows were caricatures of the European ones, being little tough boughs of some tree or other, bent into a semicircle, the two ends being connected by a loose band of horse-hair of the same character as the fiddle-string. A piece of *attan*, or the frankincense of Arabia, served the musicians instead of resin, and was kept in little bags that were suspended by strings from the handles of their instruments. A sharp pointed stick being pushed into the ground, the doll was fixed upon it so that it could move freely about. It was then connected by a long string with the bow of the fiddle, the motion of the one whilst playing, making the other jump about in the most approved Jim Crow fashion, to the great delight of the naked, chattering, dark-skinned children, who pushed their faces and little limbs among their equally amused, but more staid elders, who thronged the house to witness the performance. When the musicians departed, a present of two ahmulahs made them quite happy, and after they were gone, and the greater part of the company with them, Sheik Tigh and Hadjji Abdullah came in to ask the news, and to hear about the success of my journey to Angolahlah. Miriam, by dint of a great deal of puffing at a little stick fire, before which she knelt, managed at length, to prepare some coffee. My pipe was filled, and Walderheros, who in the mean time had come in, was sent to

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borrow another for Hadjji Abdullah. Sheik Tigh, having some Wahabbee notions, did not indulge in the fumes of tobacco, so he sat upon one of the boxes, commenting upon and endeavouring to explain by sundry guesses, the motives that could have induced the Negoos, in the first place, to order me out of the kingdom, and then treating me so well when I went up to see him. It was concluded, at last, that I was on the high way to state preferment, which was presently confirmed by my balderabah Tinta, much to my surprise, making his appearance, bringing a message, not only to me, but to Sheik Tigh. Three affaroitsh, or distributors of durgo, accompanied him, bringing presents of white wheaten bread, honey, and butter. The two latter were in large earthenware jars containing ten or twelve pounds each. The message from the Negoos for me was to the effect that I must learn the Amharic language as quickly as possible, and to take plenty of medicine so that I might be quite well to visit his majesty, on the occasion of his visit to "Michael wans," which would be during the fast of Felsat, (the ascension of the Virgin Mary,) about the beginning of the next month, August. Sheik Tigh also received an order to act as my "duptera," or teacher, and received a small piece of parchment like the one I had received in Angolahlah, and which awarded to him in return for the duty of attending to my Amharic education, ten *cuna* of grain every month.

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As I had then no more than sixteen dollars, all of which I might be called upon to pay at any moment to different parties of my escort and Kafilah friends, I was in some measure obliged to be dependent upon the hospitality of the Negoos, upon whom the information that I was very poor had a very contrary effect to what was intended by the embassy. In fact, the chief object of Tinta in following me was, to arrange with me in what manner I would receive the durgo of bread and wine which he, as Governor of Aliu Amba and my balderabah, had to provide. Walderheros, upon whose sagacity and honesty I could depend, advised me that I should make a composition or agreement with Tinta, that instead of receiving all the rations of bread, honey, butter, &c., to deliver which, daily, at my house would have been very inconvenient to him, I would take the same quantity of grain as Sheik Tigh, and although three times more than I should actually require for making bread, that which would remain, Walderheros remarked, he could easily exchange in the market for fowls or sheep.

The proposition being both reasonable and convenient, Tinta agreed immediately, but added, that the honey and the butter coming direct from the stores of the Negoos, he had nothing to do with them, and they would be continued every month in the same quantities that I had just received them, and if this were not done, I was to complain to him.

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During the nine months I remained in Shoa, however, this maintenance, which is considered equivalent to the gift of a village, was supplied to me monthly, as regularly as if I had sent my own servant for it. The only deviation in this first arrangement was when Sheik Tigh was taken away upon some duty to Bulga, the ten cuna of grain which he had received was then given to me for the purpose of paying a fresh schoolmaster.

Tinta was a good-hearted man, very cautious in his manner, and most faithfully attached to his *gaitah*, Sahale Selassee, than whom, in his eyes, there could not be a better or a greater monarch. For several days he remained in Aliu Amba, and on some pretence or other always came accompanied with Sheik Tigh as his interpreter to spend the afternoon with me. I soon perceived that the real object of these visits was to learn the motive that had induced so many Europeans to visit Shoa of late. About this time, it must be observed, information had arrived of the approach of M. Rochet de Hericourt bearing presents from the King of France to Sehale Selassee. I scarcely knew how to answer Tinta, except by complimenting him upon the able character of the Negoos, of which we had heard in our country, and induced us to desire a more intimate acquaintance with a monarch of whom report spoke so highly. This not appearing satisfactory, cupidity, the national vice of Abyssinia, I thought might be excited favourably for the explanation desired; so

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I entered largely upon the great commercial benefits that would accrue to the Shoans by a communication being kept up between their country and the sea-coast. The very supposition of a road being opened for this purpose seemed, however, to astound Tinta, who, with a deal of sincerity in his manner, begged of me, if I wished to remain on good terms with the Negoos, not to mention such a thing; for "how would Sahale Selassee," he asked, "be able to preserve his people, if they could escape to countries so rich as yours." To remove the Adal and Galla tribes, Tinta considered would be to break down the "hatta," or fence, that alone secured the Shoans at home, for they dare not leave their country under present circumstances, except with the greatest danger to their lives.

This subject-preserving principle appears to be the most important one in the home policy of the government of Sahale Selassee. It also appears to have been the foundation of many ancient systems of social communities, and the representatives of which, preserved in their original purity, have yet to be discovered in the unknown oases that stud with desert-surrounded islands intertropical Africa.

In Shoa this principle is carried out for the sole benefit of the monarch, and Paley's metaphor of the lording pigeon, over the productive wealth of the whole dovecote, typifies exactly the respective conditions of the Shoans and their Negoos. The strictly selfish and monopolizing rule, established

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by the sagacious monarch, has reduced all his people to the most abject state of submission, dependent upon him for every kind of property they possess. Most fortunately for them, he is a just and good man, for he can give and take away at pleasure; and thus holding wealth and honour in one hand, and poverty and wretchedness in the other, he has made himself the point upon which turns human happiness; and that kind of demon worship which propitiates spirits supposed to have the power of inflicting evil is, in consequence, paid to Sahale Selassee, who could at any moment reduce to a beggar the richest, and most powerful of his slaves.

It is no fiction of the Shoan law, that everything in the country is the positive property of the monarch. He can, without assigning any reason, dispossess the present holder and confer his wealth upon another, or retain it for his own use. He can demand the services of all his people at all times, who must perform everything required of them, to build palaces, construct bridges, till the royal demesnes, or fight his enemies. They are, from first to last, both rich and poor, the mere slaves of one sole lord and master, and scarcely a day passes over but in some way or other the most wealthy are obliged to confess it, or run the risk of being denounced as an enemy to the sovereign, which would be followed by confiscation of all property, or incarceration in Guancho, the State prison, with a

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heavy fine imposed. Nor do the Shoans, born and educated in this servile condition, consider such exercises of power as acts of tyranny; on the contrary, with loud protestations of their own loyalty, all the neighbours and late friends of the unfortunate individual so punished would with one accord ejaculate, "Our good King! Our good King! alas! alas! to have such an ungrateful servant!" meaning the dispossessed man of course.

Samuel's expostulation with the Jews* when they demanded a King, often recurred to me at the various instances of what I at first considered to be undue demands for ploughing, or gathering in the harvest, or building store-houses for the Negoos, which were made upon the people whilst I was in the country, and who, at the bidding of the overseers appointed to see the required work done, were obliged to leave their own business, find their own tools, material, and cattle, to perform whatever was required.

"And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest,

* 1 Samuel viii. 10—18.

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and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your King which ye shall have chosen; and the Lord shall not hear you in that day."

Samuel very probably spoke from a knowledge of the customs and practices of the kingly courts in the countries surrounding Judea; and in that case the principles of home policy which direct the Sovereign of Shoa in governing his people, appear to have come down to him from a very remote time; nor can the unfair balance of power we observe between him and his people be charged to his own cunning and selfish intrigues. With the prejudices inseparable from his education as a king, he always feels jealous of his prerogative and of his power, and the threatened diminishment in the extent of either arouses his attention immediately. He is perfectly aware that man's nature will not allow him to submit entirely to the arbitrary rule

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of even the most just superior, and that some spirits will always be springing up among his subjects, the more numerous the greater the opportunities may be, and who will endeavour to escape from the bondage to which they have been born.

It is just possible to conceive the relation between the monarch of Shoa and his people by comparison with the state and condition of the household of some rich and powerful nobleman in England; with this difference, that in the latter case it is optional on the part of the dependents to continue their servitude; whilst the Negoos possesses the stronger hold upon the services and property of his subjects, and consequently a greater power of exercising his will, because they have no means of removing themselves away from his power. If opportunities of escaping from this authority were afforded by allowing free intercourse with other countries, this would at once destroy that principle of dependence which is the foundation of the kingly power in Shoa, and which is perfectly understood to be so by the Negoos, and every Shoan is also well aware of the fact.

It can never be expected, therefore, that any freedom of intercourse will be encouraged by Sahale Selassee that is not connected with an increase of his dominion. Give to him the ancient empire, and he is our intelligent and useful ally; but this clever prince of a petty kingdom will never afford facilities for its being absorbed in any other empire.

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The proffered friendship of a lion will always be suspected by a sagacious old antelope.

A stranger, at first annoyed with the petty restraints upon unlimited personal freedom, readily excuses it when he finds this to be, part of the cautious policy dictated by the exigences of a government so constituted; and another thing which leads him to feel more satisfied with his situation in Shoa is, that he soon perceives Sahale Selassee to be superior to the temptation of abusing that power which he possesses. The contemplation of such a prince in his own country is worth the trouble and risk of visiting it. During a reign of thirty years, save one or two transient rebellions of ambitious traitors, who have led, not the subjects of Sahale Selassee, but those of his enemies, nothing like internal dissension or civil war have by their ravages defaced his happy country; whilst gradually his character for justice and probity has spread far and wide, and the supremacy of political excellence is without hesitation given to the Negoos of Shoa throughout the length and breadth of the ancient empire of Ethiopia. To be feared by every prince around, and loved by every subject at home, is the boast of the first government of civilized Europe; and strangely enough this excellence of social condition is paralleled in the heart of Africa, where we find practically carried out the most advantageous policy of a social community that one of the wisest of sages could conceive—that of

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arbitrary power placed in the hands of a really good man.

Although now experiencing the advantages of virtue and wisdom directing the actions of Sahalé Selassee, the Shoans of the last generation were exposed to the evils arising from the very opposite character, and have had opportunities of comparison between the disposition of the present Negoos and the severe and merciless tyrant who preceded him. All the older men who recollect the rule of Wussen Saggad abound with tales of the severe punishments, often unmerited, or inflicted for moral faults of omission in duty, rather than for the commission of actual crimes; which, in fact, as might be naturally expected under such a tyrant, were often perpetrated by those of his courtiers, who more particularly shared his favours. I saw some horrid cases of the excision of noses, and of obliteration of sight; unfortunates who had been doomed to these punishments by their tyrannical master, intruding themselves upon the traveller who visits Shoa, in the vain hope of receiving some medical relief. In one instance, I was requested by Sahale Selassee himself to do what I could to relieve one of these objects of his father's cruelty, in whom the rude excision of the nose had been followed by a spreading cancerous sore over the whole face.

By these reflections and observations, noted down when I was more than usually put out of my way

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by certain little acts of my servant; led me at last to reconcile the apparent anomaly of a very rascally proceeding, according to our ideas of social propriety, being quite compatible in Shoa with real fidelity, for my servant, the best that any man by good fortune could have fallen in with, reported every day to Tinta, whilst he remained in Aliu Amba, every visit I made or received, and I could not propose to go even to the next town for a morning's walk, but some reason would be found to defer it until after a consultation with my balderabah, or at least my intention made known to him.

This system of *surveillance* was most unpleasant to me, because of the groundless suspicions it seemed to betray; but I was sensible that my best policy was to pretend not to see this jealous care, but by every endeavour on my part, to deserve and secure the confidence of a prince whom I admired for his virtues, and the respect of a people, none but the most depraved themselves, could help liking for their simplicity, and for the extreme goodness of their disposition.

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CHAPTER XII.

Study of Amharic.—Remarks upon wet season in Abyssinia.—Sad prospect of recovery.—Accident to Walderheros.—Books in the Amharic language.—Messages from the Negoos.—Inconvenience of living with Miriam.—Require a house.—Expenditure.—Choosing a residence.

For several days I continued to apply closely to the study of the Amharic language. My fever paroxysms on alternate days, became gradually less violent, and my simple fare and regular habits whilst living in Aliu Amba, seemed to promise the re-establishment of my health. The only thing I dreaded was the continual wet weather, which had now set in decidedly.

In Shoa the rains commence in the month of June, Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf say about the 21st, and from the long residence of those gentlemen in Abyssinia, they must be considered very good authority. This year, the first rain that fell was on the 7th of July, but this was an extraordinary irregularity, for which the inhabitants could only account by referring it to the presence of the "Gypt sowitsh;" as subsequently, when it came down in greater quantities than they desired, and

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continued for a still more extraordinary long season. This evil was also charged to their unlucky visitors, many old monks having denounced the appearance of the white men as being the threatening harbinger of some coming evil.

On making some inquiries respecting the commencement of the rainy season, Walderheros and others, whom I questioned, stated the first day was generally considered to be St. Michael's-day, the eighteenth of June, when the King distributes the yearly clothing to his courtiers and slaves. This custom may, in some measure, be determined by the commencement of the rains, and in that case the observation of the natives differs but slightly from those of the English missionaries.

A severe thunder storm, attended by two distinct shocks of an earthquake, at an interval of a few seconds, ushered in the first heavy fall of rain. No very serious consequences resulted; a few rocks were detached from the heights above, blocking up the narrow road to Ankobar in some places, and in others, ploughing deep channels through the young green crops. A few days previously to this convulsion, the town of Ankobar, and the ridge on each side of it, had been enveloped in clouds, that hung low down the precipitous cliffs like immensely large festooned curtains, which were now raised, and again lowered, as the morning, mid-day, or afternoon sun acted differently upon the temperature of the atmosphere.

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An unpleasant circumstance was communicated to me very feelingly during the storm on this occasion. The straw roof of Miriam's house was a great resort of lizards, and their long serpentine burrows in the thatch were so many irrigating canals, all of which, for my sins, I suppose, according to Abyssinian ideas of judgment, terminated over my bed-place, and I found that unless something was done to remedy this evil, either by altering my course of life, or by applying more straw to the roof, I must drag out the remainder of my life in a shower-bath. As to getting well of an ague under such circumstances, even my sanguine disposition gave up the idea, and Walderheros, whose fortune at court depended upon my health being established, was shockingly excited at this sad prospect of recovery, and was up and looking into the matter immediately after the brief thunder-storm had ceased.

The lowness of the walls facilitated his examination, and stepping from the ground he essayed to mount the roof, but the very next moment I saw his black naked leg thrust quite through the frail stick construction; filling the whole place with decayed thatch and dirt, besides threatening my ribs beneath the hanging foot, with no gentle application of his heel, as he convulsively, but vainly endeavoured to extricate himself. Fortunately, a straw-band, which in his agony he had seized and held on by as a centre of support, broke with the violence of

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the struggles he made to escape, and he was again tumbled backwards out of the hole, head and neck over on to the ground, quite as suddenly and as expeditiously as he had before fallen into the dilemma. Confounding his zeal, and that of all such injudicious friends, I was in no humour to laugh when he came in, covered with mud and broken bits of straw, as if he had been tarred and feathered; whilst the shouts and jeers of all the boys of the neighbourhood, and Miriam's high displeasure, was all the return he got for the readiness he shewed to risk in my service, his very heavy carcase upon a rotten roof. An ahmulah was the estimate of the damage done: Walderheros procuring for that sum straw sufficient to thatch the whole roof afresh, and before night, such was his dexterity, and that of some of the neighbours who good-naturedly came forward to assist him, the work was finished, and the house several ahmulahs better for comfort, considering the season, than previously to the accident.

A long coarse grass, called "cimbyllal," three or four feet long, which grows chiefly in what is called, "Wana daggan middre," that is land situated between the "colla" or low land, and the "daggan," or elevated table land, is chiefly used in thatching Abyssinian houses. Straw is too valuable as fodder, to be so employed, even if its broken and bruised condition after the grain has been thrashed out, in the usual maner, by the feet

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of oxen, admitted of its being so used. The cimbyllal grass is cultivated in inferior soils, where grain will not grow; but this convenience, I should suppose, is not a sufficient recommendation for its introduction into England, as an economical substitute for straw for the purposes of thatching cottages or littering cattle.

For some days I continued closely at my studies, having procured, through the kindness of Dr. Roth, some Amharic school-books, published by the Church Missionary Society, and which were compiled by the industry and the very creditable zeal of the Rev. Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf, in the discharge of their duties as missionaries of the Gospel, and as agents for the diffusion of Christian civilization. A geography which had been written by the former gentleman in the Amharic language, was particularly useful to me in acquiring a knowledge of the meaning of many words, which would otherwise have been a difficult business with a native teacher, who knew nothing of English, and but very little Arabic; although much more, certainly, of the latter, than myself. The Amharic signification of Arab words familiar to Sheik Tigh, I soon learnt, and other names of visible objects were as readily gained, but words expressive of abstruse qualities I only acquired by reading with him the geography; descriptive terms of well-known subjects, conveying by a little exercise of mind, the required words for other purposes of

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application. With this work I therefore got on very well, for one great advantage was, the interest my teacher took in the subject, which, of all others, next to sacred writings, is most calculated to excite the attention of an active but ignorant mind. Long after Sheik Tigh had given up his duty of attending me, when he returned again to Aliu Amba from Bulga, he reminded me of my promise to bestow upon him my geographical lesson-book, and I was pleased to see with what reverence he received, and the care with which he prevented it from receiving any injury, by making a strong leathern case, in which he deposited it when not in use.

This was not the only instance, I observed, of the desire on the part of the people of Shoa, both Christians and Mahomedans, to possess the Amharic translations published by the Church Missionary Society. The Christians, of course, generally asked for the books of Moses, and of the four Evangelists. Tinta, in return for some trifling memolagee, or gift, desired me to procure him both these works, but before I could oblige him, an opportunity offered, of purchasing the latter in the market. He immediately bought it, and the next time he called upon me, one of his servants carried the purchase before him in triumph, and I was desired to get him a geography instead of the book he had procured himself.

Tinta, in his character as my "balderabah,"

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frequently brought me messages from the Negoos, sometimes asking about my health, or wishing to know if I required anything, "for was not Sahale Selassee my father?" to supply me with whatever I wanted in his country. After one of these visits, Walderheros put me in mind, that a house of my own would be very desirable. A very decent one was vacant in the town, and the owner had offered to sell it to me for five dollars, but not having any to spare, I was obliged to decline purchasing it. Walderheros' suggestion, that I should ask the Negoos to give me one, was a very sensible idea, as I certainly felt I should be much more comfortable in a house I could call my own, without interfering with the ways and the convenience of others. Miriam was particularly anxious that I should make myself as much "at home" with her, as possible; still I found, that Walderheros and myself occupied the whole house, to the exclusion of her and her two children. For the accommodation thus afforded me, I paid a rent treble the amount of what she would have received from any one else; three ahmulahs a-week is considered a most extravagant price for lodgings in Shoa, and I gave Miriam two dollars a month, being ten ahmulahs a-week. Unfortunately for me, Lieut. Barker had resided in the same house nearly four months, and having always had a plentiful supply of cash, I could see my economical house-keeping greatly disappointed the expectation of Miriam's

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friends, who, on my taking up my quarters in her house had congratulated her on the favour of Allah, which was so evidently shown to her by another "Gypt" coming to reside with her.

The poor woman herself, however, was very thankful for the few salt pieces I could offer her weekly, and being sensible that it was only because I had not more to give, she never annoyed me with hints of disappointed expectations, or invidious comparisons with the habits of my predecessor; although others, who had no business to expect anything from me, were much less delicate in their allusions to the liberality of the "Kapitan," who, to judge by the kind inquiries respecting him, made by male and female, old and young, seemed to have been a universal favourite among the inhabitants of Aliu Amba.

Walderheros, whose greatest weakness was to be considered the servant of a most powerful and influential master, felt any sneers at my poverty a great deal more acutely than myself, and which, after all, he generally excited himself, by his assumption of importance, and the affectation of swearing by my name, "Ahkeem e moot," "may the doctor die," if a thing was not so and so, as if I had been a magnate of the land; for besides swearing by the life of the Negoos upon all important matters, the dependents of Abyssinian noblemen are accustomed, in private life, or on trivial occasions, to asseverate the truth of anything by similar

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imprecations upon the lives of their masters. This practice has not a bad effect upon a listening stranger, being a very pleasing characteristic of the natural affection that ought to exist between master and servant.

Several affronts that Walderheros had received about my economy, and the small establishment I kept up, determined him at length to put it to Tinta himself, if such a scandalous little place I lived in was fit for a friend of the Negoos, and as I supported this expostulation by a direct request to have a proper domicile appointed for me during my stay in Shoa, my worthy balderabah undertook to see the Negoos next day about the matter. This was so far satisfactory to Walderheros, who could now talk about nothing else but my new house, and a large garden which was to be attached to it, and where, according to his account, teff grass, jowarhee, and cayenne pepper plants would all flourish most advantageously, especially as regarded my expenditure. According to his account, there could be no question about the success of my housekeeping. Everything was propitious, and he amused me by the manner in which he used to endeavour to convince me how comfortable we should be. He had a wife, and he had a slave girl, caught by himself on some Galla expedition; besides these, I was to buy a donkey, and then there was himself, all of whom were to work like horses, and save me

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three ahmulahs a-week, about seven-pence halfpenny, and, in fact, my whole expenditure, by his making out, was to be a dollar a-month, one-half for his wages during that time, and the remainder for the purchase of poultry and sheep.

Tinta, in two or three days, brought a reply from the Negoos, that I was to look out what house would suit me, and if I were well enough to visit him at Ankobar, where he was coming to from Angolahlah, in the course of the week, he would then give the necessary directions to put me in possession of my choice.

Night and morning we were now to be seen, Walderheros and myself, slowly walking along the narrow confined lanes in search of a house that would suit us. I leaning upon him on one hand, and in the other, to assist in supporting my weakened frame, I carried a slender rod, about seven feet long, called a "zank," in common use, as an aid when walking, by the people of Shoa. We visited every vacant house in the town to examine their condition and character, and occupied ourselves entirely by suggesting alterations and repairs, or devising sundry projects of domestic comfort, in connexion with the expected grant by the Negoos of the one which I should prefer. For five or six days we thus amused ourselves, and when the eve of the day came on which I was to see the Negoos at Ankobar, we were as far from having come to a decisive choice, as upon the first day we com-

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menced the search. Some were too old, some stood in a crowded neighbourhood, the repairs of others would have required an outlay of five or six dollars, here the thatch was nearly all gone, and there the garden was too small, and the last was worse than all, for, by a curious accident, the roof settled down on the top of us as we entered, the wattled wall on the outside giving way as we pushed open the dilapidated door to get in. There was not one, in fact, that I could fix my mind upon, and Walderheros being equally difficult to please, we might have continued a long time without coming to a decision, had not the next day's visit to the Negoos rendered it necessary to fix upon some one, that I might be prepared to answer the Negoos's usual question, "What is it you desire?" in return for the memolagee or offering I had prepared for his acceptance, and which, as it was of a peculiar kind, it shall be treated of in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Custom of giving Memolagee.—Sugar boiling.—Success—Gratify the Negoos.—Receive house.—Claims of kindred.—Remarks upon intestate property.—The two brothers of late owner.—Removal to new residence.

A CUSTOM exists in every Abyssinian court, which requires that no one shall go empty handed into the presence of royalty. Every visitor to the Negoos of Shoa in this manner brings with him some present, which, after having been registered by an officer appointed for that purpose, is deposited at the feet of the monarch. In return, it is expected that some request on the part of the inferior is to be graciously acceded to, and if what is asserted be true, the Negoos is obliged by the law of custom to consent to whatever is asked, should he accept, in the first instance, the proffered gift. A monstrous exaggeration of this system of presenting gifts, to be returned by some greater amount of property, is, at all events, practised very considerably, by the Abyssinians, upon ignorant strangers, for the custom is not confined to an interchange of favours with royalty, but is general also among all classes. I have myself frequently

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been imposed upon, or at least have had attempts made to impose upon me in this manner, when ridiculously small presents were offered, and then on my acceptance followed some exorbitant request. A memolagee of eggs, for example, would usher in a modest demand for as many dollars; when, from a calculation I have frequently made, one of the latter would purchase one thousand eggs, at the rate of five eggs for a needle, of which two hundred could be bought for a dollar. Again, a jar of ale, containing about five gallons, which would cost the third of an ahmulah, or salt-piece, or the third of two-pence halfpenny, would be deemed quite a sufficient gift to ask in return a slave girl, or a mule. To prevent all mistakes, after I had discovered that I had given considerable offence, in some cases, by refusing what had been demanded, I made it a rule to know previously to my accepting it, what was the object for which the memolagee was offered, and even then it was very seldom I would consent to give more than the market value of the pumpkins, water melons, and smuggled honey, which generally constituted these propitiatory offerings.

The memolagee I had prepared for this visit to the Negoos, at Ankobar, was about two pounds of sugar which I had managed to manufacture from cane growing in the neighbourhood of Aliu Amba. I calculated upon the effect that such a present would have upon the naturally sagacious mind of

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the gifted monarch of Shoa, and that the usefulness of such an article, introduced as a manufactured product of his own country, would strike him as being of more importance than many richer presents, the use and value of which he could not, from the circumstances of his situation, have any idea of.

On my arrival in Shoa, I found that the Wallasmah Mahomed cultivated sugar-cane in a valley, at the foot of the prison hill of Guancho, and that he supplied the table of the Negoos with it as a sweetmeat, small pieces being cut off with a knife, and masticated as I have seen the inhabitants of Ceylon enjoying it. Whilst staying at Miriam's house, I conceived the project of boiling down some sugar as a mode of employing myself when confined indoors by the fever, or the wet weather. For this purpose I sent Walderheros to the Wallasmah with a canister of gunpowder as a memolagee for some sugar-cane, and got in return as much as my zealous servant could stand under, considering that he had to carry the bundle upon his head and shoulders for nearly six miles, along roads of no ordinary kind in the wet season, for that rich, greasy, slipperiness of surface, where toes well stuck into the mud, alone admits of any chance of the barefooted wayfarer, pulling himself up the steep "banks and braes" he has to surmount.

Possessing no means of crushing the cane properly, I was obliged to have resort to simply pounding it in a large wooden mortar, two or three of which,

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of different sizes, are generally to be found in every house in Shoa. Miriam, her son, Walderheros, and myself occupied ourselves one day peeling and slicing the long stalks before we could place the cut-up cane in the mortar, and then we were employed two days more in triturating it, during which process a little water was added to take up the saccharine juice, and to free it, according to my idea, more readily from the cane. Two handsful of the beaten mass were then placed at a time, in one of my towels, which being folded up, the two extremities were collected together, and by dint of a great deal of twisting and screwing by two of us, we managed to force out the liquid portion, leaving a hard round ball of woody fibrous substance, which, however, had been pounded sufficiently fine to receive and retain, very visibly, the diaper pattern of the cloth in which it was strained. These refuse cakes were very greedily eaten by some goats, and I dare say, such food would be highly nutritious to animals. The expressed juice having been received into my copper cooking vessels, they were placed uncovered upon a low fire, where they continued until more than one-half of the liquid portion was driven off. The remainder was then poured into some shallow earthenware dishes, which, with stones carefully placed under the lower edges of the vessels, to obviate the inconvenient slope, were exposed upon the conical roof of the house, to the evaporating influence of the tem-

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porary and dodging glimpses of sunshine, that struggled through the vast number of clouds, which at this season of the year obscured the sky.

How well I recollect my querulous anxiety, and the patient watchfulness of Walderheros, as all day long we were obliged to be on the expectant quick move, to bring out of the passing showers these evaporating dishes, and which, at length, we were obliged to submit to the continued action of a slow fire indoors to effect our object, for we discovered, that what between the moisture in the air, and the frequent falls of rain the season was not at all propitious for sugar making. In the end we succeeded in obtaining about two pounds of very excellent brown sugar, as the result of our joint labours, and very well pleased all parties were with their success.

It was curious to observe the interest that was taken in the process by the inhabitants of Aliu Amba, nearly all of whom visited me during the three or four days we were employed, and not a few insisted upon helping us. Of these latter, Walderheros was especially jealous, as he wished all the honour and glory as the actual manufacturer to devolve upon himself, giving me only the credit of knowing how it should be done, and of directing him. When the sugar had crystallized and assumed the shape of the much-desired luxury, a new class of visitors then came begging for a little as a medicine for their sick children, and these

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became so numerous, and I could not well refuse their request, that at last Walderheros, in despair, complained to Tinta, who had all along been much interested in the success of the experiment, and who immediately came, and advised me to put the sugar into his charge, if I wished to save any for the Negoos.

Here I must observe, that although the very simple art of extracting the sugar from the cane was unknown to the inhabitants generally of Shoa, still a few visitors from Ankobar, and a messenger from the Negoos, who had been sent to Aliu Amba on purpose to learn if the rumour was true which had reached the palace, that I was engaged in this manufacture, had seen Shoan sugar before. These assured me that the French traveller, M. Rochet d'Hericourt, when he was in Shoa, had made sugar for the Negoos, so that although I observed on this occasion great ignorance of a simple but important art among the Shoans, still I do not wish to be understood as claiming the honour of having first introduced sugar-making into their country.

It was fortunate for me that I had thus turned my attention to subjects likely to benefit the good people of Shoa, for as it so happened, in the middle of the night, I was attacked with a paroxysm of fever so violent that it quite disabled me for the rest of the next day, and prevented me making any attempt to proceed to Ankobar. As, however, I had sent word by the messenger of the Negoos

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that I was coming, and my balderabah Tinta had arranged everything for our starting together by sunrise, I considered that it would be as well to send my servant with the sugar, and a verbal message to the Negoos, stating why I could not attend myself in person. Tinta also considered, that circumstanced as I was, it would be the best plan for me to adopt, and readily agreed to accompany Walderheros, and explain my wishes respecting the house. After a little conversation, we also fixed upon the one most likely to suit me, and they then departed with the sugar, which I had packed up for them in an old tin powder-canister.

They returned early in the afternoon attended by a long train of Tinta's servants, and three palace affaroitsh, bearing presents of wheaten bread, honey, and a jar of preserved butter called "natta kibbee," the only kind that can be obtained in Shoa during the times of the rains.

The reception of my balderabah and envoy, Walderheros, at the palace had been most flattering, and my request for a house complied with immediately by the gratified monarch, who also ordered one of the affaroitsh to remain in Aliu Amba to see me comfortably settled in my new quarters.

The next morning was a very busy one for Walderheros, as from my illness everything had devolved upon him. He had first to arrange with two surviving sisters of the late owner of the house, who came forward to claim sundry articles

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of furniture that had remained in the house after the death of their brother. In Shoa, when a man dies, leaving no male heirs, the King takes all that he died possessed of; even the widow and female children have no claim to anything but that which is granted to them by the justice and compassion of the monarch. These relations are, however, so far considered, that a small "memolagee" only is expected, and they are then generally allowed to retain the personal property of the deceased, but the landed estate is always retained and granted to some other male servitor capable of bearing arms. This concession, small as it is, does not extend to other ties of kindred, for a person dying and leaving only sisters or brothers, all kinds of property possessed by the deceased is seized by the governor of the town in which he had resided, for the benefit of the Negoos, and an account of all such intestate property is annually drawn up by that officer. When a governor himself dies, before his successor takes office, an inventory of every thing contained in a large store house is made, and sometimes all the articles, generally household furniture, are taken to be examined by the Negoos, who, retaining the most valuable himself, returns the remainder to the charge of the new governor. From these repositories are rewarded minor meritorious acts, and sometimes the things are exposed to sale by a kind of auction, and thus disposed of. It is not

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unusual for household furniture and utensils, instead of being carried to the *gimjon bait*, the King's store house, the only public building found in the towns and villages of Shoa, to be allowed to remain in the house to which they have belonged, and in that case, the next holder upon whom the King has conferred it, comes in for these conveniences. It was so in my case, for I found that I had not only obtained possession of a house, but found it ready furnished also. One little drawback from my apparent good fortune was the circumstance that everything was in such a dilapidated and rotten condition, that I was not surprised at the governor not insisting upon such rubbish being taken to that general repository, the "gimjon bait." The fact is, the good people of Shoa manage, as in every other country, to remedy by some conventional subterfuge any political or social injustice; and here, where the descent of property is diverted from its natural course by an arbitrary custom, the evil is counteracted by the exchange, during illness, of everything valuable in furniture or household utensils with near relations, for the most worthless description of the same articles, so that in case of death the Negoos gets a very sorry collection as the heir-at-law to the deceased.

No sooner did Tinta proceed to the house to put Walderheros in possession, than the two women, sisters of the late possessor, came forward, and

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improving upon the general system, of making the exchange of old worn out things for nearly new ones, they now appealed to a cloud of witnesses, who took part with them, to testify that many of the jars, baking pans, and instruments for clearing and spinning cotton that were in the house, absolutely belonged to them, and which at various times they had lent to their deceased brother. Tinta, to prove his devotion to me, for being now considered to be in great favour with the Negoos, my friendship was valuable, demurred to the claims of the women; but Walderheros, who knew me a little better, put an end to their vociferous claims, and recommending them to see me upon the subject, said it would probably be all settled satisfactorily without a complaint being made to the Negoos, which had been threatened by Tinta.

The market value of every thing that formed their claim did not amount to half a dollar, but as the matter seemed to interest all the inhabitants of the town, it must have been considered of some importance in their eyes, so when they came to appeal to me, and I fully understood, by the interpretation of some Arabs resident in Aliu Amba, what it was that was required, I told the two women they had my consent to take away whatever they chose, only to be quick about it, so that on the morrow I might enter upon my new possession without any more trouble.

July 23d. — This morning, my house having

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been well swept and dusted, I was summoned by Walderheros to come and superintend all other arrangements myself. I managed to walk down from Miriam's, and a new large alga, or bedstead, had been sent from the King's store for my use. It was placed for the present in the garden, an ox skin, as usual, being spread over it, so I had nothing to do but to throw myself upon it, and as my boxes and cooking utensils were brought in, direct Walderheros where to place them. Fortunately, no rain fell this day, and my new neighbours, anxious to testify their happiness to have me among them, kept thronging into the garden, amusing themselves also by surveying the premises, suggesting repairs and improvements with the most officious good feeling possible. As all the inhabitants around were Mahomedans, several of my visitors sent to their houses for their gourd shell water pipes, and placing large stones beneath them, took up their several positions in a semicircle around the front of my bed. Miriam, to whom I had given three dollars, pleasingly surprised at receiving so much, seemed most anxious that I should be comfortably settled in my new residence, her son helping Walderheros in arranging everything properly, whilst she busied herself preparing coffee for my numerous visitors.

I was tired and worn out by the time sunset sent them to their several homes, and left me to move into the house, where I sat upon one of my boxes

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until the alga had been forced into a narrow recess between the double walls, and my bed reported by the indefatigable Walderheros to be at length ready for me to retire to rest. The pretty wife of Sheik Tigh had brought me some teff bread for supper, as she expected there would be a deal too much for us to do on the first day of my removal, not to feel obliged to any one taking the trouble of baking off our hands. The "wort," or cayenne soup being also prepared, after a light Abyssinian supper, I slept better than I expected, or could have hoped for.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Division of time.—My new servant, Goodaloo.—Thatching house.—Islam assistants.—Kindness of Tinta.—Finish roof.—Feast upon the occasion.—Remarks upon practice of eating raw meat.

THE Abyssinians divide the day and night into eight portions of three hours each, and as they commence their fasts the evening preceding, it is to be presumed that they begin a new day at sunset, like the Jews and Arabs. Three hours after sunset is *leilet*, "evening," all the time intervening between nine o'clock and twelve being so called. From "night's noon," or *aculilielet*, until *duro-oitshi-art*, "cockcrow," is another term of three hours, and from cockcrow to *twart*, "sunrise," is three more; after twart is *arrafat*, or "nine o'clock;" then *aculican*, "mid-day," between which and sunset is *tuzziart*, or "afternoon."

During the first night after taking possession of my new house, about the hour of "duro-oitshiart," (here let the reader learn a little Amharic), I was awakened, by a loud thunder-storm, to the disagreeable discovery that my new residence was not water-proof, for the roof admitted a gread deal more rain than it threw

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off, and had not Walderheros constructed a kind of pent-house over my bed with a stiffly-dried ox-hide, I should have been very soon wet through. The necessity, too, of having some kind of candle or other on emergencies, was forcibly suggested to us, by the difficulty we experienced in getting the damp firewood lighted, by the blaze of which alone we could see to arrange our substitutes for umbrellas. Walderheros, however, soon overcame all difficulties, and after extending his bed, the aforesaid skin, over me for my protection, he coiled himself up under a huge Amharic shield, tilted upon its edge, and supported by a stick in that position.

It is unnecessary to say we did not go to sleep again, but kept talking away about what we would do to the roof, as soon as the sun had risen, and we could only get out. Accordingly by twart (sunrise), Walderheros had started on a long walk nearly to Ankobar to get some straw, and also to engage a "wandum," that is, a near relation of his whom I had determined, at his request, to receive as an additional servant. His wages were to be only five ahmulahs a-month, about one shilling and a half-penny, and as he was stated to be the very first of all modern thatchers, I did not consider this an extravagant demand, particularly as I required his services so much at this time.

"Wandum" is, strictly speaking, brother, but with the Shoans it is used as a general term for all male relatives. An uncle is the "wandum," of the

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mother or father, as the case may be, whilst cousins, especially between opposite sexes, appear to be more affectionately related than our brothers or sisters. A friend is called "wordage," a name derived from some relation between them and one's own bowels, "word," signifying that viscera, which reminded me of a scriptural passage, where, describing the affection of some one for another, it is said that "his bowels yearned towards him." "Bal-ingero," is another expressive term for a companion, signifying "the possessor or sharer of bread." And as I am on the subject, I may mention, that an additional term of friendly relationship among this very social people, is derived from the circumstance of the marriage tie in this country, being but very loosely observed. "Leech enart," mother's child, is sometimes bestowed upon a very dear friend, as being expressive of a great deal more affection than "Leech abat," father's child.

By "arrafat," nine o'clock, A.M., Walderheros, and his wandum, Goodaloo, appeared at the rude misshapen wicket in the small ring fence of jowarree stalks, that enclosed my garden. Both were bending beneath huge bundles of the straw-like cimbyllal grass, but being too large to admit of passing through the narrow entrance, they were thrown down in the little lane that led from my house, and from a few other neighbouring ones,

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into the principal street on our side of the town, to the market-place.

Goodaloo, was spare, short, and active, seemingly designed by nature for the ticklish occupation he professed; for the frail stick skeleton roof, when divested of the old straw, looked as if it would have given way beneath the foot of a cat. After a professional survey, and a most important consultation with Tinta, his deputy, a Christian like himself, and half-a-dozen rich Islam inhabitants, it was determined to be most advisable, that only a portion of the roof should be renewed at once, so that I might have the shelter, either of the old or of the newly finished roof, to sleep under, during the three days required to put all to rights. The Governor and his Deputy, however, were the only useful members of this Council, for the former directed his servants to supply me with the necessary grass, whilst the latter assisted Goodaloo in thatching. The Islam gentlemen, with the cool dignity which, somehow or other, they do assume most naturally, sat down upon the skins brought for that purpose, and proceeded to call for coffee, and to give directions to their Christian superiors, in a manner that would have delighted Satan himself, to have observed, if he takes any pleasure at all, in seeing honest, simple humility, treated with the most evident contempt.

All this time, I was glad to keep out of the way,

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lying upon the alga inside; but when actual business commenced, I began to think I must retreat into the open air. Black, sooty flakes, now began to fall thickly from the glistening well-smoked roof frame, which consisted of long bamboo canes, that diverging from an elevated centre spread around in a wide circumference, to rest upon a round wattled wall of sticks and mud. To this annoyance, was soon added falling bits of rotten thatch, that descended upon my bare head and shoulders, until I could stand it no longer, but rushed out of the dirty mess and seated myself upon a quantity of clean straw near to my Mahomedan visitors, who appeared to have made my garden a public café, for they kept coming and going all day, staying a little to watch if the proceedings were going on to their satisfaction, and aiding, to the extent of an "Inshallah" (please God), "it would be finished by to-morrow."

Before evening, one-third of the roof was well covered in, for as I had promised to give a couple of sheep at the conclusion of the business, to the servants of Tinta, they worked away at his cimbyllal grass, as if it had been all my own; and had I not inwardly resolved to return his kindness in some way or other, my conscience would have often induced me to call out, "Hold! enough!"

July 30th.—By cock-crow again Tinta's servants were at my gate with straw, and Walderheros and Goodaloo went out to recommence upon the roof.

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We continued to be highly favoured by the weather, only a slight shower or two interrupting the otherwise bright sunshine in which I lay basking on my straw couch all day. A thick mist enveloped the whole length of the Ankobar range in front, which seemed to attract all the clouds, or at least condensed the moisture in the atmosphere to the west of Aliu Amba, leaving the more favoured country to the east beneath a clear and beautiful sky. The heavy bank of fog, however, prognosticated rain to us, and every time it caught the eye of Walderheros, he seemed to move as quickly again, as he supplied with fast filled arms the bundles of cimbyllal to the two workmen upon the roof. So expeditiously, indeed, did all proceed, that before sunset the whole was finished, although, for farther security and ornament, another day's labour was required, which was promised with much self-gratulation by Goodaloo, who confidently asserted that had the house been thatched for the Negoos himself, it could not have been done more quickly or more scientifically.

It being too late, and the men too tired to kill and dress sheep, Tinta's servants partook, as last evening, of a plain repast with Goodaloo and Walderheros, consisting only of dry teff pancakes, and a sop or two in a shallow earthenware vessel of the cayenne soup. To improve this very poor dinner, I gave Walderheros an ahmulah to get some "tallah," and he bought for that sum about fifteen gallons of excellent ale. This he and two

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of his companions brought into the house in three large jars, a girl following with the ahmulah, which, I expect, she had changed for one of her mother's smallest, and after spanning the salt-piece before my face, with a very lackadaisical look, intimated that it was a very thin one, and she hoped I would give her a larger one instead. Walderheros, who was just as cunning as any of his countrymen or women either, always kept the ahmulahs he received in exchange for dollars in two bags, one containing the larger, the other the smaller ones. With the former, sheep and tobacco were purchased, as for these commodities none but the best ahmulahs are taken, whilst the latter were generally given in return for services performed by any of the neighbours, and which I paid for, according to Walderheros's idea, far too liberally. In the present case, on my telling the girl she should choose for herself, down came the bag containing the little ones, the trick of which I was not then aware, and after a long search, none pleasing the lady, she withdrew, keeping the one which had been originally given to her.

One of the jars being now placed upon a low chair that had come to me as a memolagee for some medicine, a long mekanet, or girdle, from the loins of one of the party was carefully wrapped around the wide circular mouth of the jar, after the dirty dry seal of cow-dung and clay had been removed. Over the lip of the vessel, slowly strained

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through the cloth, flowed the now released liquor, which was received into well-shaped drinking-horns of a conical form, and about nine inches deep. One, full of the sparkling beverage, was handed to me, Walderheros, in the first place, pouring a little into the hollow of his hand and drinking it, as the tasters of food and of drink of old are represented to have done previous to serving their superiors. This little ceremonial, though its origin is entirely forgotten by the Shoans, is never omitted by them, and we here find a custom, first established by a fearful policy, still retained as a matter of form, and as a dutiful obeisance of inferiors to their masters. The drinking party sat together in the dark talking for some hours, industriously replenishing the horns until two of the jars were emptied of their contents, when, pretty comfortable, no doubt, Walderheros and his friends quietly subsided upon the ground, where they had been sitting so long; their busy talk was stayed at once, and all was soon as still as the night should be.

July 31*st.*—Long before sunrise I was again disturbed by Tinta's servants, who were up and leaving my house to return home, so as not to be absent at the first call of their master. This day was to be devoted to the beautifying and adorning the new roof after the most approved design. The broken neck of an old jar was soon found, which served as a kind of coronet to gather the

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loose ends of the thatch at the apex. Immediately below this were thrust two sticks across each other, their projecting extremities preventing a tight band of very pliant twigs from starting, and which beneath it had been twisted several times around the loose ends, still farther to secure this part of the roof, that, as the centre of the whole, was something analogous to the key stone of an arch.

This being finished, the flat hands of Walderheros and Goodaloo were applied to the irregular projecting straw ends of the lower edge or circumference of the roof, which were patted gently back into one even line, with something like the attention to detail of a careful barber arranging the straggling hairs of a full-bottomed wig. The circuit of the whole having been made, I was duly called upon to inspect their work; but as I supposed that it was not so much to give an opinion as it was to express my approbation, I took care sufficiently to gratify them, by stating it to be my firm belief that no "Gypt" could have done it half so well. To subdue unqualified approbation, and that my praise should have the more importance, as coming from a man of decidedly good taste, I suggested that a brightly painted red earthenware crown piece to the whole, like those used to beautify their churches, would have looked more religious, and better than the ragged rusty looking neck of the broken jar, which, not having been put on exactly square, but cocked a little on

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one side, gave a rather saucy slovenly finish to my cottage ornée.

My indefatigable Islam friends now came to congratulate me upon my roof being finished, and began asking about the cow, with the blood of which I was to sanctify the door-posts, as they said, to keep "Shaitan" from disturbing me. They contended that, to render the charm efficacious, the animal must be killed by a Mahomedan. I shook my head, and denied the necessity of this, or indeed of the sacrifice at all; but I told them, as they had helped me so much, they were very welcome to partake of the two sheep Walderheros had already gone to purchase. They said not a word in reply, and many of them considered my offer to be a gross insult, and stayed away several days in consequence. However, as I had now begun to speak a little Amharic, and did not require their assistance so much as formerly to interpret for me, I was ungrateful enough to allow them to come round again in their own good time.

The evening was spent by Walderheros and his friends killing the sheep; and having boiled the meat in several earthenware vessels, demonstrated, by a very hearty meal, that on ordinary occasions the Shoans are as fond of cooked meat as the rest of mankind.

The customary practice of eating it raw, so singular, and apparently so characteristic of a barbarous and savage disposition, has, in Abyssinia,

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a natural inducement for its indulgence, which, I think, is an apt illustration of the manner, in which man is led instinctively, to the employment of such means within his reach, to enable him fully to enjoy life, under whatever circumstances of situation he may be placed.

The difference of food between the inhabitants of the Arctic region and those of low intertropical countries is so great, that it has not failed to strike physiologists, who have, from the comparison, been led to the knowledge of an important truth in the natural economy of man. It has been observed that human life is supported in these opposite extremes of situation by different kinds of food, and that whilst in the north, blubber and enormous quantities of raw meat are devoured by the natives, that in the torrid zone, vegetables constitute the principal diet. The reason is, that during the process of digestion a considerable amount of natural heat is engendered in the system, and this is found to be determined in quantity by the nature of the food. An entirely fleshy diet occasions the development of its maximum, and contributes materially to the comfort of man in cold situations, whilst, on the contrary, vegetables are scarcely able to excite sufficient heat necessary to convert them into nutriment; and, in fact, beneficent nature has provided for such a want, by supplying in hot climates a sort of artificial warmth, in the stimulating aromatics which are the characteristic productions of the torrid zone.

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The high table land of Abyssinia, although situated between the tropic of Cancer and the equator, from its great elevation of ten thousand feet or more above the level of the sea, possesses a climate which is not less cold than that of the northern parts of Scotland. Being a country but poorly wooded, the chief supply of fuel being the dung of cattle, an instinctive feeling dependent upon the pleasures of a state of warmth, has taught the Abyssinians that the flesh of animals eaten raw is a source of great physical enjoyment, by the cordial and warming effects upon the system produced by its digestion, and to which I am convinced *bon ivivants* more civilized than the Abyssinians would resort if placed in their situation. Travellers who have witnessed their "brunde" feasts can attest the intoxicating effects of this kind of food, and they must have been astonished at the immense quantities that can be eaten in the raw state, compared to that when the meat is cooked, and at the insensibility which it sometimes produces. Eating raw meat, therefore, a usual practice with the Esquimaux, and which among them is an absolute necessity, by the Abyssinians is considered a luxury, or in fact as a kind of dissipation, for eating it in that state is only indulged in by them at festivals, and it is then taken as a means of enjoyment, and is not more barbarous or disgusting than getting tipsy upon strong drinks.

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CHAPTER XV.

Market day in Aliu Amba.—Toll of wares.—Court of Piepoudre.—Appearance of the market.—The salt money.—Character of the different vendors.—The prices of several articles.—No Jews in Abyssinia.

July 29.—The next Friday, feeling somewhat stronger, I determined to accompany Walderheros to the market-place. As in England, the days of such weekly meetings, for the convenience of sale or barter, vary in the towns of Shoa. In Aliu Amba the Mahomedan Sabbath is found most convenient, whilst Ankobar market is held on Saturdays, and in other places Mondays or Tuesdays are the appointed days. Nothing, I think, characterizes a peaceful people, or a healthy social condition, more than these weekly meetings for the mutual convenience of buyers and sellers. The security of property is so apparent, honest industry and prudent economy so evident, that even in the most unfavourable positions for the increase of knowledge, and the advance of civilization, wherever these evidences of a people's foresight and good disposition exist, I never despair, but that when other more favourable opportunities are vouch-

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safed, the soil will not be found unfruitful of the good seed that may be scattered upon it. This struck me the more forcibly, from my previous sojourn in Adal; for with what different feelings did I witness the busy restlessness, and the not inharmonious murmur, of the multitude of smiling contented beings that were gathered in the market-place to-day, from those I have experienced, when startled by the sudden cry, the confused rush to arms, and the silent squatting of my Dankalli associates, either in the sullen muttering calahm circle, or else, as with loud yells of defiance, they formed the line of immediate fight; either of which characterized the only public assemblies I ever witnessed among them.

Putting on my Arab cloak I followed Walderheros, who had been long engaged, previously to our starting for market, selecting the kind of dollar most in reputation among the Shoans. We proceeded along a narrow winding lane, between high hedges of the *kufah bait*, and senna shrubs, that assisted in forming the enclosure belonging to each little cottage, that stood upon the banks on either hand; playing about the wickets of which children without number attested the peace and plenty enjoyed by the people of Shoa. Population is the criterion of human happiness; wherever is real enjoyment of life, the offspring of man will always be most abundant.

A very short descent led us to an equally wind-

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ing road, but broader, and having more of the character of a public way, than the little lane from my house. Here we met market people hawking their wares, with loud cries; or loud-talking disputants, carrying on a strong argument, as they battered away, with heavy but harmless blows of their long sticks, upon the goat skin sacks of grain or cotton, with which numerous donkeys before them were laden, and which were being conveyed to the market-place.

The low hum of distant voices gradually increased into a murmur, and then into a hubbub, as we entered the market-place, which was a large plain, occupying the southern half of the table rock, bare and stony, except in the centre, where a high circular hedge of a thin pipe-formed euphorbia fenced in the Mahomedan burial place of the town. Its limits, besides, were well defined by a low stone wall, carried all around, and upon that portion of it facing the entrance of our road into the market place, sat Tinta, wrapt up in the customary manner in his tobe, save his head and one arm, with which he gave directions respecting the receiving of toll, or deciding such cases of dispute as might arise in the course of the market. As soon as he saw me with Walderheros, he called me to him, and as I approached, he shifted his position so that I might sit upon the sun dried ox skin by his side. A favoured visitor, honoured thus by a seat upon the bench.

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I observed that everything that is exposed for sale in the market pays a kind of duty. This is generally either in kind, or an equivalent in salt pieces, the only money in Shoa. Grain is examined by the Governor, to whom it is brought, who determines the amount to be taken as toll, and which is regulated according to certain customary laws. Such toll is measured by single handsfull, a species of measure very usual in Shoa, and called "tring." Butter is submitted to a similar process, the officer appointed scooping out of the gourd-shell, in which it is generally brought, a quantity with his fingers, which is then put into a recipient jar that stands by his side. The salt merchants, cattle sellers, and, in fact, all dealers, pay for the convenience of bartering their goods, and during the day large heaps of ahmulahs, and of market produce, accumulate around the feet of the Governor, whose perquisites of office they appear to be. A less profitable employment for him is the settlement of disputes, as very long-winded debates sometimes occur, before a settlement can be established between the disputing parties; and for this business no fees are demanded, although I have no doubt, such a situation of general referee in matters of the kind, is very productive of private gifts.

People in the habit of attending the market compromise their tolls, by a regular payment of from one to three ahmulahs weekly, and they are

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then allowed to bring whatever produce they choose. I also understood that the people of the town were exempted from any imposition of toll for such articles they exposed for sale.

After amusing myself for some time, watching the proceedings at this place for the "receipt of custom," and had witnessed a decision in this counterpart of the ancient Piepoudre courts of feudal times, I left Tinta for a while to stroll about the market.

Excepting the dress and appearance of the people, the articles exposed for sale, and the language in which the transactions were carried on, the Abyssinian market, in its more prominent character, exactly resembles similar assemblages of people in English towns; the same confused hum of voices, busy ever changing figures crossing and recrossing, stooping to look at wares, or pushing through the crowd to make way to the seats of those selling that which they may require. All is bustle and apparent confusion, over which loud cries of hawking sales-people reach to the very outskirts of the town.

I pushed along with the rest, followed closely by Walderheros, carrying the goat skin bag over his shoulder, in which to carry home the ahmulahs we were in search of, in exchange for our dollar. For a moment as we passed, groups would suspend their conversation to turn and look at the novel figure that had intruded among them, and

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strangers, to whom the white man was a curiosity, would inquisitively ask from the townspeople all particulars of my nation, and my business in Shoa. No impertinent interruption, or shouting in derision, made my visits to this busy scene unpleasant; a short whisper, that I was a *balla durgo*, and a friend of the Negoos, was sufficient to restrain the most curious from pressing around, even when, on pretence of directing me in choosing the ahmulahs, which was an opportunity that the more careful frequently sought, to introduce themselves to my notice, and which was generally, in such cases, the preliminary to some request for medicine.

The object Walderheros and I had now in view was to change the dollar, and for this purpose we sought out that portion of the plain, where in several orderly lines, numerous salt brokers sat behind heaps of "ahmulahoitsh," the remarkable currency of Shoa, in common with all parts of Abyssinia.

These ahmulahs, as they may be called, are thin bricks of salt, which have been not inaptly compared in size and shape to a mower's whet-stone; they vary some little in size, but few of them are less than eight inches long. Their form is rather interesting, from the fact of their being cut somewhat in the ancient form of money pieces, thinner at the two extremities than in the middle, and if of metal might not have been inaptly termed a

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spit. The breadth across the centre of the ahmulah is a little over two inches, whilst at the extremities it scarcely measures one inch. The height or thickness is uniform, being usually about one inch and a quarter. As may naturally be supposed, this money, consisting of a material so soft and deliquescent as common salt, becomes denuded by use, and that a great difference consequently exists between the weight of a new specimen, and one that has been in exchange for only a few months. During the rainy season, especially, in Abyssinia the waste of the ahmulahs is very great, although the inhabitants, by burying them in the wood ashes of their large hearths, or suspending them in the smoke from the roof, endeavour to preserve them, at that time, from the action of the moisture in the atmosphere.

It not unfrequently happens, also, that carelessness exposes them sometimes to the chances of a quick reduction in size, by leaving the ahmulahs in situations where mules or cattle can get to them; and as all domestic animals are inmates of the same apartment with the family during the night, these opportunities of robbing their master by licking the salt-pieces, is frequently a temptation too great for their virtue. It is amusing, also, sometimes to witness in the market-place the contests between children who have been entrusted with an ahmulah, and the flocks of goat and sheep with which they are immediately beset. These circumstances are mentioned

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because they have considerable effect upon the value of this sort of money, ahmulahs much worn not being received as such at all, and can only be weighed against weight in the ordinary mode of barter, in which case, I presume, they lose their character as currency, and must be considered articles of exchange alone.

As money, new salt-pieces are given during the dry months in the town of Aliu Amba, at the rate of twenty for the most favoured Austrian dollar. This is of the mintage of the Empress, Maria Theresa, and is called "*sait burr*," woman silver; and it is particularly insisted upon, that to be genuine, these should possess certain peculiarities, namely, that the bust of the Empress should bear a tiara or bandeau placed in the hair, a star of many points upon the shoulder, and beneath all, near to the rim, the letters F. S. It is of great importance to travellers in Abyssinia, at least in Shoa, to be aware of the predilection of the natives for this kind of dollar, which will always bring in exchange twenty-five per cent. more than those of the mintage of the Emperor, called "want burr," man silver, and even ten per cent. more than the Maria Theresa dollars, which do not present these three important requisites. In the wet months of August, September, October, and November, from sixteen to eighteen ahmulahs only can be obtained for the best dollars, and for the others less in proportion. During this time, it is with great difficulty that the "want burr,'

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or Emperor's dollar is taken at all by the Shoans. I considered that twopence halfpenny was above the actual value of an ahmulah in English money.

The salt-brokers are generally Christians, who proceed in little kafilahs of fifty or sixty donkeys to the northern confines of the kingdom of Shoa, to a town called Giddem, where they meet with Mahomedan merchants, subjects of Berroo Lobo, the chief of the Argobbah, or valley country, to the north of Efat. These latter obtain the ahmulahs that they bring to Giddem from the salt-plain of Ahoo, situated on the confines of the old kingdom of Dankalli, to the south-east of the kingdom of Tigre. At Giddem the best dollars are exchanged for twenty-eight or thirty ahmulahs; so that a profit of nearly fifty per cent. repays the expense and trouble of carriage for little more than a distance of forty miles to Aliu Amba. A like increase in value is attendant upon farther carriage: thus sixteen ahmulahs can only be got in exchange for the best dollar in Angolahlah, which is about thirty miles from Aliu Amba.

No people are more troublesome than the Abyssinians in inspecting the money, whether salt-pieces or dollars, that pass through their hands; the former are turned over, spanned, balanced doubtingly in the hand for several minutes before the final determination is taken. The worst is, that the vendors generally insist upon choosing, or at least beg to be permitted to do so as a great favour, out

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of the whole lot, that may happen to be in the possession of the party from whom they are receiving them; the time so occupied being sometimes provokingly long. At length the single ahmulah is fixed upon, a last hurried look over the remaining pile as they lie displayed upon the floor is taken, then a glance at the chosen one in the hand, and with such an effort, as if the party felt convinced that he had taken the least; he at last reluctantly tears himself away from the fascinating examination of their relative value.

Dollars, again, are first well scrubbed with the fingers, then spit upon, followed by a good rub in the hair, and very probably, after all, the coin is handed back with a sagacious shake of the head, as much as to say, "I am not going to be done in that way," but seldom a word passes between the parties. A salt banker at length being found who is content to take the chance of the dollar being a counterfeit, a good deal of higgling then takes place whether nineteen or twenty ahmulahs shall be given, but supposing the dollar is declared to be of the first order, the broker in that case generally gives way, and the full value is obtained.

It not unfrequently happens, either from carelessness or atmospherical causes, that the ahmulahs become very cellular and light. In that case the holes are stopped up with a paste of meal and fine salt dust, but the ahmulah so adulterated is generally rejected at once when offered, or a very con-

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siderable reduction is made in its value when any article is purchased.

When by any accident the salt-pieces are broken, they are receivable only as common salt, although sometimes, if but into two pieces, these are bound round with a piece of very pliant tough bark called "*lit*," and at a diminished value still circulate.

Besides ahmulahs the Shoan markets are supplied with a rough broken salt in thin broad pieces, of no use but for culinary purposes, by the Dankalli, who bring it to Dinnomalee from the Bahr Assal, or salt lake, near Tajourah. This kind of salt is of less value than the ahmulah, and is only employed as barter, and the solid money-piece will command weight for weight, one half as much more of the Adal salt; so that the Shoans submit to a loss of just fifty per cent. of material for the convenience of their clumsy currency.

The town of Aliu Amba being occupied by Christians and Mahomedans, its market presents a much more varied appearance than either that of Farree or Ankobar; the former being almost exclusively frequented by Mahomedans, whilst the latter (which is held in the meadow adjoining to the mill of Demetrius, on the road to Tchakkah) is as exclusively Christian in its dealings. To judge from the character of the produce sent to Aliu Amba market, it would not be difficult to assign the greater amount of wealth in Shoa to the possession of the Christian subjects of Sahale Selassee; but, on

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the other hand, it appears to be a principle of religion almost, among the Mahomedans, to conceal the riches they possess, so that appearances are not to be trusted. Had I not known that the more wealthy of their religion invariably invest their money in slaves, to supply the Dankalli and Hurrah dealers, I should certainly have inferred from the scanty and very limited stores placed before the saleswomen of that faith in Aliu Amba market, that the Islam inhabitants of Shoa were exceedingly poor. Many of these women sit for a whole day, offering, in exchange for anything in the shape of corn that may be offered, a thimbleful of "col," (antimony used for blackening the edges of the eyelids,) a few lumps of gum myrrh, a handful of frankincense, or a little shumlah, the blue and red threads of unwoven cloth, brought from the sea-coast, and which is used in forming the ornamental borders of their large body cloths. Sometimes their scanty stock is increased by three or four lemons, or as many needles. On the contrary, the Amhara (the name now given only to Christians of this country) bring an abundance of cotton cloths, of cattle, of corn, and are the only money-changers I saw, some of them sitting behind high walls of new and good-conditioned salt-pieces.

Trade, in a great measure, is carried on by barter, an exchange of commodities being much more general than purchasing with ahmulahs; except in the case of cattle buying, when the price is gene-

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rally fixed at a certain number of these salt-pieces. For two ahmulahs a very fine young sheep or goat may be bought, and the very best of the kind will not sell for more than five. A good-sized goat, however, commands a much higher price, ten or twelve ahmulahs being sometimes asked. An ox for ploughing brings about seventy ahmulahs, or, if small and intended for killing, may be bought as low as thirty. Horses and mules vary in price from seven to twelve dollars. The latter are preferred by the Abyssinians. I have been offered a very excellent horse for two dollars, and have seen one blind, but in good condition, sold for twelve ahmulahs, or about two shillings and sixpence.

The next principal thing in the market is the cotton cloths, which are woven of one general width, about three quarters of a yard, and from ten to fifteen yards long. Of the common kind are made the "sennafil," or wide short trowsers of the men, and the "shumah," or waist-cloth, of the women. The body-cloth, or tobe, is common to both sexes, but those of the men being much larger than those of the women, are generally double folds of the cloth, or four cubits in breadth, and at least seven cubits long. Sometimes they are of an extravagant size. A narrow border of the blue and red woollen stuff, called shumlah, woven into the cloth, is the only ornament, and these coloured stripes will be sometimes repeated at the distance of a foot from each other through the whole length of the cloth

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These tobes vary in price according to the number of these ornamental additions to the simple cotton thread, of which the greater number are entirely composed. Four or five dollars is a great price to give for one, but the one forwarded to our Queen by Sahale Selassee was worth thirty dollars. I gave for a cloth for Walderheros, which was ten yards long and three quarters broad, ten ahmulahs; but when I wanted one a little finer, with a stripe across each end of the blue and white worsted, for my own use, I had to give a dollar for it.

The mekanet, or girdle, generally woven for the purpose, is considered to be worth one ahmulah for a cubit, or from the point of the elbow to the extreme tip of the middle finger, which is the only measure of cloth in Abyssinia. Neither hats nor shoes are worn by the Amhara; but the Islam men wear sandals, made something like the Dankalli ones, and I think those which are brought into the market are made by some settler in Aliu Amba, either from Adal, or the city of Hurroo, and not by a native Abyssinian. I bought myself a pair, having worn out my English shoes, and gave the sum of three ahmulahs ($7\frac{1}{2}d.$) for them, but Walderheros bargained for a sword-belt besides from the man who sold them to me.

Among the articles of food exposed for sale, are great quantities of grain in small skin-bags holding perhaps, four or five pecks, and which may be purchased for as many ahmulahs. Barley is somewhat

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cheaper than wheat, but the price is not so much less as I should have expected. Marshilla, or dourah, is half as cheap again as wheat. It is used principally as "*nuffrau*," being boiled in water, and with a little salt sprinkled upon it, eaten in that state. This dish forms the principal food of the slaves belonging to the slave-merchants on their journey to the coast, but in Shoa the slaves in Christian households, as I have before observed, usually live in the same manner as their owners, and are invariably considered as part of his family.

Peas, kidney-beans, and the common horse-beans are also used in the same manner, and are generally sold so low as two Islam cuna, or nearly two pecks, for an ahmulah. Onions and the green leaves of a species of kail are hawked about the town, broken salt being exchanged, according to the quantity that can be decided upon as the fair value, after a deal of higgling between the two parties.

Tut, or cotton, and tobacco are sold for salt only, according to weight, a rude kind of balance called *mezan* being employed for this purpose. This is a kind of steelyard, made of hide and wood; a piece of thick cowskin is dried in the sun upon a round stone, till it assumes the form and size of a small washhand-basin, which is suspended by four thongs of skin to the thin end of a stick, about fourteen inches long, heavy and thick at the further extremity. Notches are cut with a knife, not in any regular manner, for about two inches from the scale end, on the under side.

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These notches receive the bite of a cotton thread loop, and when suspended by this, its position in any of the knots mark no established standard weight, but merely that of the article to be exchanged; of course such a weighing-machine can only be employed in barter.

Honey and butter are not regularly brought to the market as the supply is dependant in a great measure upon the season, scarcely any during the latter part of the dry, and the earlier part of the wet season, being to be obtained but through the favour of the Negoos, who forwards to his governors or favoured guests large jars of these articles as presents during the period of its scarcity. The manner in which butter is preserved by the Abyssinians is rather peculiar; and I must observe, that strictly, all the honey produced in the country is claimed by the Negoos, who, however, generally gives some equivalent for it, so that I never heard this *apparently* arbitrary circumstance complained of; although I have frequently noticed the clandestine manner in which small quantities of this delicacy were obtained by the nominal owners, who wished to have the opportunity of obtaining some few ahmulahs by selling it to me. The kind that was exposed in the market for sale, was the refuse of the first droppings of the comb, or merely the last drainings mixed with more than one-half of fragmentary wax, and the dead bodies of bees. The Abyssinians, to their credit, do not kill these in-

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teresting and industrious insects, but place in juxtaposition to the hive, supposed to be nearly full of honey, an empty one, and in a very short time, the whole of the inhabitants of the older hive, have commenced constructing fresh combs in the new one placed for their convenience.

For one ahmulah a *winechar*, or drinking-hornful, holding about a pint of honey, is obtained; and double that quantity of butter brings the same price, so that I consider both articles very dear. Immediately after the rains, however, three or four times this quantity of butter may be obtained for an ahmulah. Besides cotton and tobacco, "*gaisho*," or the dried leaves of a shrub belonging to the same species of plant as the tea-tree, is also sold by weight against salt; these leaves are used as a bitter in brewing the native beer instead of hops. Six times in weight of this article is given in exchange for one of salt, but if weighed against cotton, four times the quantity of gaisho is given.

Tobacco in small round cakes, two inches in diameter, and half an inch thick is also weighed in exchange for salt, two of tobacco being considered equal to one of salt; it is grown in the *wana-daggan* country, or where the climate is temperate, in contradistinction to *daggan*, or highlands, and *kolla*, or lowlands. Tobacco is the article in which the people of the wana-daggan chiefly speculate, taking it down to the kolla country in exchange for cotton, seven times its weight being

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then demanded. They also carry berberah, or the red cayenne-pepper pods to the *daggan*, or cold country, where they obtain wheat or other grain in exchange, five times the weight of berberah being given. The quantity of grain given for tobacco depends greatly upon circumstances; the eye of the seller, and the appetite of the purchaser of the tobacco, determining the rate of exchange.

Besides these articles, all of which are exposed for sale in the market-place of Aliu Amba, saddle-makers from Ankobar, spear and sword manufacturers from the Tabeeb, ôr artificers' monasteries, supply it with their wares, and the industrious inhabitants of the latter also bring hoes and plough-irons, and their women and children hawk about the town, with loud cries, coarse earthenware utensils for sale.

No Hebrew pedlar is to be seen in this, or any other market-place, though a recent traveller of Shoa has asserted such to be the case, and to allow the assertion to pass without denying it at once, might lead to some ethnological error among the naturalists of the human race, who might be speculating upon the origin and descent of the true Abyssinian. Such was the ignorance of both the Amhara and the Islam of these people, that scarcely a stranger called upon me, but desired to know if I were not a "Yahude" (Jew). I questioned them in return upon the very subject, and none had even met with one, except some of the travelled slave-

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dealers, the two or three pilgrims Shoa could boast of who had visited Mecca, and who always advanced, as one evidence of the extensive journeys they had made, that they had seen a Jew. The Falasha of northern Abyssinia, speaking the Agow language, cannot be pretended to be of Hebrew descent, and the more we hear of this interesting people the more assured we shall be, that although practising somewhat similar customs, no connexion, more recent than prior to the era of the Exodus, can be traced between them and the Jews.

Having noticed everything that can interest the reader in an account of an Abyssinian market, I shall now return home. Walderheros slings over his shoulder a broad chain of ahmulahs, connected together by the pliant *lit* bark; ten of the salt-pieces reposing upon his chest, and the other half-dollar's worth in a corresponding manner hang upon his back. Having arranged his burden, the change for one dollar, we proceed together, saluting Tinta as we pass him, sitting in judgment upon a case of dispute that has just arisen; with shoulders bare, the noisy declaimant addressing him, gesticulates with much energy; the etiquette of respectful undress, (unrobed to the waist,) admitting of the freest exercise of the upper limbs, and a corresponding display of the most approved oratorical action is the consequence.

The evening of the market-day in Aliu Amba, closes with similar scenes of jollity to those which

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characterize the hebdomadal meetings of farmers and their friends in our own agricultural towns; and the expression "market fresh," best expresses the condition of the staggering Christians, and of the singing groups of male and female Abyssinians returning home, who have been closing the labours of the day with sundry deep potations of beer.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Visit from Sheik Tigh.—Strange news.—Arrival of Abdoanarch.—Situation of my house.—Wallata Gabriel.—Baking bread.—Vapour bath.—Cure for hernia.

AFTER my visit to the market, I was confined to my house for two or three days by illness, but feeling a little better this morning (August 1st), I brought out a small saw I was possessed of, and began to amuse myself, in giving the last finish to the roof, by removing the projecting ends of the cane rafters, which made the low eaves look very ragged. Whilst thus employed, Sheik Tigh, who had been absent some days at a "*tescar*," or funeral feast of a frontier Islam Governor, called, and after congratulating me upon having come into some property at last, gave me the astounding information that Tinta had been removed from the government of the town, and a rich Hurrah merchant, who had come as an Ambassador to Sahale Selassee, from the Imaum of that city, was now the Governor.

The day that I left Miriam's house, I heard that a Hurrahgee kafilah was coming into Shoa, and

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learnt then, that Aliu Amba was the town appointed for the people belonging to it, as Channo was for the Adal kafilahs. I sent Walderheros to Tinta's house to get more information, but he had already left the town and gone to Angolahlah to see the Negoos; as I supposed, to remonstrate. I did not tell Sheik Tigh I was very sorry at the news he brought me, because, as he was a Mahomedan, he seemed so to enjoy the circumstance of having a governor of his own religion, and my regret, as a Christian, I was afraid, would only elate him the more. I did the good man wrong by my unworthy suspicion, for he was certainly one of the best-hearted men I ever met. On asking him who the new governor was, and what business he had come upon to Shoa, he told me that his name was Abdoanarch, and the Wizeer of Sheik Houssein, Imaum of Hurrah, and that he had come to induce the Negoos to join in a league with all the other monarchs of Southern Abyssinia to prevent the ingress of Europeans into that country. I was not well enough to ask many questions, but felt glad, that the return of the Embassy to the coast had been decided upon, previous to the arrival of Abdoanarch from Hurrah, and that consequently he could not boast of having effected such a desideratum among the Mahomedans of Shoa.

The bestowal of the government of Aliu Amba upon the Hurrah ambassador, was a proof

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of very high regard; and as the language of that celebrated but little known city is a dialect of the Geez, similar to the Amharic, Abdoanarch was not considered to be altogether a foreigner. Besides, he was, as I have remarked, a Mahomedan, and as three-fourths of the inhabitants of Aliu Amba professed the same belief, his appointment caused great satisfaction. With him, a large kafilah of his countrymen had arrived, at least, two hundred, so that they made a sensible addition to the population, which, at most, did not exceed three thousand people. Indeed, accommodations for them could not be found, and they were obliged to erect a number of straw huts, on the other side of the cemetery in the market-place. This new village consisted of about fifty houses, all of them, merely thatched roofs, resting upon the ground, with a low entrance, not three feet high, cut out in front.

Sheik Tigh sat with me nearly all day; the singularly situated and nearly unknown city of Hurrah affording an inexhaustible subject of conversation. As, however, he had never visited it, and I subsequently received more accurate information respecting this interesting place from a native, I shall not now attempt to describe it.

August 2.—My house was situated on the western face of the rock of Aliu Amba standing upon its own little terrace, which was enclosed partially by a thick-leaved hedge, and where this failed by a row of the yellow-stalks of the high Indian corn plant.

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It overlooked and was overlooked by a number of other houses similarly constructed, each built upon its own garden platform, one above the other, like a series of high steps, from half way down the steep hill-side, to the summit of a bluff, cone-like eminence, in which the northern extremity, of the otherwise flat-topped hill of Aliu Amba terminated. On this exalted point, the long thatched roof of the largest house of the town was visible over a strong palisading of splintered ted, and over which two tall mimosas towered like giant sentinels. To go near here was considered a crime, and to break through the enclosure would have been a sacrilege. This of course was royal property, the "gimjon bait," where was preserved until the annual account was made by the Governor to the King, all the fines, lapses by death, and duties, that had accumulated during that time. Beneath this public storehouse was a long terrace, divided into several enclosures, in each of which stood a snug cottage; and these again looking upon one below, the top of which scarcely reached the level of the ground, the upper ones were built upon. Here dwelt a most respectable man, an Islam slave-merchant, who kept a gratuitous school for boys, whom he instructed in Arabic, that is to say, in reading and writing passages of the Koran. Far beneath the level of this my own house stood, and before it, and on either hand, were several others whose gardens all surrounded mine. The hill at this point, too,

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seemed to assume a more umbrageous aspect, for high "*shuahlah*," sycamore fig-trees, and mimosas, sheltered beneath their foliage the unassuming roofs of thatch, which less and less, diminishing as they descended the slope of the hill-side, seemed at a very short distance from my garden to have dropped into the yawning valley that separated Aliu Amba from the opposite height; which still higher, differed in its more gently sloping ascent, and its ridge being occupied by a village inhabited exclusively by Christians. Over this again could be seen still more elevated crests, and beyond these others, until the eye reached the last, the commanding height of Ankobar; which, extending some ten or twelve miles north and south, each extremity then curved towards the east in one vast amphitheatre, that encircled, as in an embrace, an extensive valley of little village-crowned hills and sunny slopes of cultivated fields.

This afternoon, having another serious attack of my fever fit, one of my first acquaintances in Aliu Amba, Hadjji Abdullah, undertook to provide me with a certain cure. He went away, and returned after a short time with a large bundle of green odoriferous herbs. Walderheros was directed to boil these well in my tea-kettle, and having poured out the decoction into an open-mouthed earthen vessel. I was wrapt up in a large tobe, underneath the folds of which the remedy was placed. In this

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manner I sat for about a quarter of an hour, until a profuse perspiration resulted from this primitive kind of vapour bath, which had certainly one good effect, that of producing at night a long-continued sleep.

August 3*d.*—As I felt a good deal better this morning, I took a walk as far as the market-place, to see the houses of the new come Hurrahgee people. A great many turned out for my inspection, to gratify themselves by looking at me; which party was most entertained, I or them, at the mutual novelty of our appearance, I do not know, but after exchanging salutations with an old man belonging to them, I returned home with Walderheros.

Finding that I was still laying myself under great obligations to Miriam, who came for a few hours every day to grind flour and bake bread, I determined that Walderheros should send for his wife to come and take up her abode with him as housekeeper. Goodaloo was accordingly sent on this errand, and before night they returned together. As a kind of offering upon the occasion she brought, hanging in her tobe upon her back, a large pumpkin. She was a good-looking girl of about seventeen or eighteen years of age, and had been married to Walderheros for five years. Her father was one of the King's watchmen, holding a farm for that service, which required his absence

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one week out of four, at whichever palace of Ankobar or Angolahlah the King should be then absent from.

She was very soon down upon her knees before a broad circular pan of earthenware placed upon three stones, which was being heated for baking bread over a glaring fire of sticks. Taking a short horn, in which was contained the well-powdered dust of the oily seed of the cotton plant, she scattered a small portion over the surface of the nearly flat dish, which was about a foot and a-half in diameter. She then rubbed this well over the whole with a rag. The leavened batter had been made ready in the morning by Miriam, so Wallata Gabriel, my new housekeeper, had only to take a little out in a basin, and from this pour it upon the heated dish, quickly spreading it into a thin layer, and then placing over all a hollow shield-like cover, also of earthenware, the edges of which, where it rested upon the pan, being luted with wet rags that stood by contained in another spare basin of water.

Sticks, a bundle of which had been brought in by Goodaloo, lay upon the floor of the house, and with these a bright fire was kept flaring away for about five minutes, when the cover being taken off a nice-looking crumpet curled up its edge all round, as if anxious to be taken off and eaten. This was adroitly done by Wallata Gabriel placing upon her lap as she knelt a neat straw mat, some-

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thing larger than the baking-dish itself, made of a band of grass folded around one end as a centre, and stiched into that situation. Upon this was pulled, by a quick jerk, the warm cellular-surfaced bread, and then getting up, my new handmaiden presented it to me as it lay on the mat, with a look that said "Taste it yourself, and see if I cannot bake bread."

In this manner she soon turned over six or eight of these pan-cakes, and a fowl having been boiled to-day for the sake of the broth, of which alone I could partake, no other food was cooked for my three servants, they so far observing the fast, and soon after their meal they retired to rest; Walderheros and his wife occupying an ox-skin upon the floor, Goodaloo making his bed in the porch, which was formed by the passage into the house leading through the outer and inner wall, being closed in on either side by a mud-plastered partition.

August 4th.—I was glad to find Tinta come back this morning, he having returned with a message, that if I knew how to make gunpowder, the Negoos wished me to manufacture some for him. On inquiring, I found that my balderabah still continued in the good graces of the Negoos, who, instead of the town of Aliu Amba, which convenience had required should be given to Abdoanarch, had put Tinta into possession of a much more valuable one called Ramsey, in sight from my garden. He was instructed, however, to live as usual in Aliu Amba, to communicate between the Negoos

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and myself, and to keep, at the same time, a careful watch upon the outgoings and incomings of the great Abdoanarch himself.

I soon satisfied him about the gunpowder, and the next day was appointed for taking the first step in the process, by making some charcoal, for I was led to suppose that the inferiority of the coarse grey-looking sort of native manufacture was owing to the badness of that article. Two of Tinta's servants were immediately despatched for wood of the "ted" (*Juniperus oxycedrus*) tree, which I had chosen as best calculated for charcoal. The ted tree is a species of pine, and grows in the characteristic form of that tree. The wood smells exactly like cedar, and is extensively used for fuel in the royal residences. It does not grow on the table land, but only in the upper portions of the valleys of Efat and corresponding situations, at an elevation of between six and eight thousand feet above the level of the sea.

A large euphorbia called kol-qual, sometimes thirty feet high, with strong spreading arms, bearing at their extremities a little red fig-like fruit, was pointed out to me by the Shoans as the tree supposed to produce the best charcoal. This cannot be the tree that Bruce asserts yielded so much milk-like juice upon striking it with his scimitar, although I have heard it asserted that it is. On making the experiment myself on several of different ages, I never could produce more than

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a mere exudation of a white fluid, which collected in drops, and which I found upon inspissation turned black, and formed a substance not unlike Indian rubber. The most singular circumstance respecting this tree is the four-sided character of its branches, being as angular as if put together by a carpenter. On examining the interior of a decayed portion, I found a shell of hard wood not more than three-fourths of an inch in thickness; and the interior sometimes, from side to side, several inches wide, hollow, but divided into chambers by partitions, consisting of a substance like the paper formed by wasps in constructing their tree-suspended nests.

I was called in to a singular case to-day; for in Aliu Amba, I must oberve, my professional services were in great request, and I had stated hours of attendance daily at my house, from sunrise to nine o'clock, during which time my door was regularly thronged. I went to see my new patient with Walderheros, and found a youth about sixteen years old, afflicted with a rupture in the groin, but the protruded intestine had been returned by the boy's father just previously to my going into the house. The people I found there, wanted me to do something to prevent the recurrence of the complaint, but as I had no trusses with me, I only recommended rest and future care against violent exertion. Understanding that I could do nothing more, it was determined among them to proceed

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with an operation customary in their country, and which I was invited to witness. I accordingly sat down whilst the boy was laid upon his back on the alga. The father then took a red burning stick, Walderheros and others holding the patient down, and restraining him whilst the former placed the rude searing instrument over the diseased part, blowing it with great vigour all the time to keep it alight. In less than a minute the painful operation was over; and the boy, who had been previously reminded that he was a man, bore it with great fortitude.

The Shoans assert, that after this application of the actual cautery rupture does not again occur; and I could readily conceive it probable, considering the great contraction sometimes consequent upon burns, that this effect produced over the parts affected in hernia might, in such cases, counteract the relaxation of muscular fibre which occasions this disease. At all events, where so few practical preventives for a most serious complaint are known, I have considered this observation worth recording, and as a medical man even recommend the operation.

August 5th.—Three long bundles of splintered ted, carried upon the head of as many slaves of the Negoos, were brought to my house this morning. Cutting and carrying wood is the principal occupation in Shoa of the male slaves, as carrying water is of the females; and the prophets, when they say of the Jews carried into captivity, that "they will be cutters of wood and drawers of water," convey the

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allusion that both sexes will be oppressed alike, and suffer equally the laborious hardships of a state of slavery.

It rained too much to-day to be able to make any charcoal; and as I required the pieces of wood brought me to be cut into more convenient lengths, Walderheros and Goodaloo occupied themselves doing this within doors. Sheik Tigh having gone to reside at Bulga for a month, had given up his office as my teacher in Amharic, so I determined to look out for a duptera, or Christian scribe, as I was anxious not only to speak Amharic as quickly as possible, but also to read the Geez character, and get some knowledge of that very interesting but neglected language.

To-day commences a long fast for fifteen days, called "Felsat." No meat is allowed to be eaten, and the first food taken daily must be after three o'clock in the afternoon. Walderheros grants me an indulgence, as I am very ill and weak. It seems children and sick people are not required to fast. I never saw the members of any Church less bigoted than the Christians of Shoa, but I am given to understand that more to the north much less toleration is exhibited towards Mahomedans and individuals of other faiths. I have often thought, civilized as I considered myself to be, that had I been in the place of Sahale Selassee, I should not have acted quite so fairly to my Mahomedan subjects; and when we consider that they

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are far inferior in numbers to the Christians, in the proportion of about three to one, a great deal more credit is due.

August 6th.—Being a very fine morning, I had my alga brought into the garden, and superintended Walderheros and Goodaloo making the pile of wood for burning it into charcoal; covering it with the stalks of the thorn apple-plant, which alone seemed to flourish around my house to the exclusion of every other kind of herb. Upon this green kind of thatch a layer of earth was placed, and all being completed, fire was applied below, and the aperture through which it was introduced immediately closed up; a vent, or chimney, through the centre alone being left open.

Instead of any length of time being necessary, I found my charcoal-heap blazing away as if air entered at twenty places. Being my first attempt as a practical burner, I somehow expected this, and therefore carried off the failure as a thing intended, for Walderheros began to think his learned master a bit of a quack when he found that I was ignorant of the simple native cure for hernia; and he would now have been downright sure of it had he not supposed that all my present proceedings, regarding the charcoal-burning, was necessary to produce the excellent article required to make gunpowder as it was manufactured in my country. I therefore sat and looked at the blazing pile, revolving in my mind what could possibly have caused the failure, for I

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believed I had observed every particular, that I had been taught was necessary to convert wood into charcoal. Fortunately for my credit, just when I concluded that I knew nothing about it, and had best say so, and before the whole heap had been consumed, a sudden shower of rain poured down; this of course spoiled all my arrangements, and among other things, to all appearance put out the fire. Here was a case for condolence; and Walderheros, thinking I must want something to support me under the disappointment, when the rain had ceased, which was not for some hours, took a straw basket and went to examine the ruins. One effect of the rain, it seems, had been to beat down the dome of earth and moist stalks of the thorn apple, when the support of the wood inside had been lost by the combustion. This buried considerable portions of unburnt extremities of the pieces of ted, and as they continued smouldering underneath the fallen cover, the result was that, much to my surprise, Walderheros brought me back the basket full of beautifully close-grained shining black and very light pieces of charcoal. As Walderheros thought it was all quite natural and right, I made no other remark than merely asking him "if the people in Shoa ever made charcoal like that."

Having succeeded so well in this, it encouraged us to proceed, and I sent to Tinta to say, that on the morrow he must supply me with hand-mills and

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mortars to grind down and pulverize the other ingredients, sulphur and saltpetre, of which a large quantity of each had been brought to my house from Ankobar during the day.

Both sulphur and saltpetre abound in Shoa, the former being obtained from the volcanic country immediately to the west of the Hawash, near Azbottee. From an extinct crater, nearly half a mile from our halting-place at Lee Adu, I had brought to me a piece of the purest sulphur, that required no farther process of refinement than the natural sublimation by which it had been deposited in the fissures of the cone. The Adal Bedouins who occupy that neighbourhood bring it to the Negoos of Shoa as a kind of tribute, and sometimes a demand is made upon them for a certain quantity, which is delivered in a few days, so plentifully is it found, to the Wallasmah Mahomed, who forwards it to the Negoos.

Saltpetre is found in many places, both on the table-land of Shoa, and in the valley countries to the south and east. It is principally brought from Bulga, where the grey rubbly earth it forms is ploughed over, and the disturbed soil containing more than fifty per cent. of the salt is placed in immense earthenware jars containing water, in which, by frequent agitation, the saltpetre becomes suspended. The liquor is then decanted, and in large saucers allowed to evaporate, when the finest needle-formed crystals of the salt are formed.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Determine to be cupped.—Mode of operating.—Medical knowledge of the Shoans.—Surgery.—Remarks upon their diseases and their remedies.—The cosso tree.—Mode of using the cosso.—Other curative processes.—Manufacture of gunpowder.—Success.—Health improving.

August 7th.—Being Sunday, Tinta did not come to my house. I also staid within all day, and took advantage of Walderheros having nothing to do, to be cupped in the Abyssinian manner, during the cold stage of the fever, and which I expected would attack me in the afternoon. A constant dull pain in the left side, just over the region of the spleen, gave me considerable uneasiness, for although I was aware that in ague this viscus is always affected, still I could not divest myself of the idea that in my case it must be organically diseased. I proposed, therefore, that the incisions should be made in that situation, but Walderheros would not hear of such a thing. Abstracting blood, to be beneficial, he asserted, must either be upon the crown of the head or at the back of the neck, and should he perform the operation anywhere else, and after all I should die, that the Negoos would put

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him to death as my murderer. Seeing that I could not induce him, and both his wife and Goodaloo being of the same opinion as himself, I allowed him to use his own discretion. During the consultation, however, that was held upon the occasion, Hadjji Abdullah came in, and it was decided among them I should be cupped upon the top of the head. The hair being accordingly shaved off the assigned place, in a circle about the size of a crown-piece, the hollow upper end of a horn, about four inches in length was then placed upon the bare skin. To the tapered extremity of this, through which was a small hole communicating with the interior, Walderheros applied his mouth and exhausted the air. This being done, he then closed the aperture with a piece of wax, that had been placed ready for that purpose around the end of the horn. The usual tumefaction of the integument immediately beneath was occasioned by being thus relieved of atmospheric pressure. After a little time remaining in this position, a needle was inserted into the wax, and air being admitted into the horn, it fell off. Walderheros, with the heel of a sharp razor, then gave three jerking cuts in the skin, and immediately replacing the horn over the part, again withdrew the air, and a slight movement of the tongue closed the aperture as before with the wax. In a few minutes, the ascending surface of the blood, seen through the white semi-transparent horn, indicated that sufficient had been extracted, and holding down

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my head, at the request of Walderheros, the primitive instrument was withdrawn, the whole operation having been performed by these simple means as speedily and as effectually as with the most expensive apparatus.

Excepting their acquaintance with some few cathartic remedies, all derived from the vegetable kingdom, the Shoans possess but little knowledge of medicine. A specific effect upon the bowels appears to be absolutely necessary to convince them that the remedy employed is medicine; and it is upon this principle that the articles contained in their limited "Materia Medica" have been selected. The only exception to this is a demulcent drink, made with honey and the mucilaginous seeds of the soof, *Carthamus tinctorius*, which is taken to relieve the local symptoms of "goomfon" (common catarrh).

The science of medicine principally consists of mysterious ceremonies, to be observed whilst collecting the few herbs employed as remedies, and in a knowledge of certain absurd formula of characters, which, being inscribed upon a little bit of parchment, is then enclosed in a case of red leather. The amulet is worn around the left arm above the elbow, or among the women around the neck, attached to the front of the martab. Pieces of red coral, sea shells, and various other things, are also believed to have protective powers against diseases. Copper rings, especially around the ancles or wrists, are considered to be very efficacious in the cure of

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rheumatism. These kind of remedies are supposed to be obnoxious to certain demons who afflict the body during sickness, named "saroitsh," of which there are several, but great difference of opinion exists as to their exact number.

The Shoans have also external applications, and little operations, by which they remedy the consequences of accidents, but these are mere exigencies, conceived at the moment by the most sagacious of the spectators, and, excepting blood-letting and cupping, no art or mystery exists among them worthy of being dignified with the name of surgery. A strange operation for the removal of the whole tonsil, when enlarged by inflammation, I have often heard spoken of, but never had any opportunity of witnessing, although I believe one of the Irish soldiers attached to the Embassy, was foolish enough to submit to the operation, and almost died in consequence. The mode they employ of blood-letting and cupping is of very ancient origin, and appears to have been received from former Egyptian connexion; as, since my return to England, I have observed, in some representations preserved to us of the arts and manners of the people of that ancient country, the same method of venesection was adopted by them, as by modern Abyssinians, and also, I may remark, by their less civilized neighbours, the Dankalli. This is performed in Shoa with the blade of a small razor, held between the fore-finger and thumb. The point of the left

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thumb of the operator is then placed upon the frontal vein of the forehead, which becoming turgid, is laid open by a jerking cut with the razor, and the blood flows freely. Cupping with the assistance of a cow's horn, as I have before been describing, I have also seen practised in exactly the same manner, by the negroes of the western coast of Africa, so that this method of abstracting blood appears to be very general, and strongly attests a previous civilized condition among the ancestors of the inhabitants of this continent, as such a practice argues a greater advance in intellectual acquirement for its first introduction into use, than we are willing, ignorant as we are yet of what civilization exists in the unknown countries of intertropical Africa, to accord to the ignorant natives, with whom we are at present acquainted.

I must not omit to observe, that among other external remedies, counter-irritation is a very favourite practice among the Abyssinians. Thus, in inflammations of the lungs, several small burns are made upon the chest, either with a red-hot iron rod, or a piece of burning charcoal, and this remedial process appears, and, I dare say, deservedly, to rank high as being very efficacious in the opinion of the inhabitants. In rheumatism, also, this kind of treatment, and the disease, is so common on the high table land of Shoa, that an exhibition of joints, to intimate how the patients

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have suffered, is sometimes most ludicrous; our inclination to laugh, such is man's nature, not at all diminishing with increased evidences of the patient submitting to the barbarous, but still, I have no doubt, excellent remedy.

Syphilis has been represented to be the curse of the land; and certainly, from King to beggar, according to their own account, they either have it, or are about to have it. Priests and their wives are not exempt, nor do even children of the tenderest age escape. The reputation of this disease is as general among the Shoans, as scrofula is in England, and it is admitted and spoken of in the same manner without any reluctance or shame. This disease is supposed by the natives to originate from several causes; among others, that of eating the flesh of fowls which have become diseased, by living in the neighbourhood of some one more than usually afflicted, and great care accordingly is taken, when purchasing fowls in the market, to learn from whence they came. The prevalent opinion also is, that it is communicable by the simplest contact, and those who are suffering from it are, therefore, carefully avoided, except by their own relations, and for years after they are quite cured, a reluctance to eat or drink with them, except with certain precautions, may be observed among those of their acquaintance who are aware of their previous condition. From these and many other observances against contagion, it may be

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surprising that the disease should be so general. As it struck me as being very remarkable, I made a point of examining into the subject, and have concluded that by far the greater majority of sores, and unhealthy appearances upon the body, though referred by the patients themselves to this disease, arise, in fact, from other causes, and are confounded with syphilis, sometimes, probably, from the consciousness of having deserved it, but more frequently from their ignorance of the fact, that the peculiarity of their situation, and the character of their system in consequence, predisposes them to an extensive ulceration, should the continuity of the skin be separated by the slightest bruise. The ill effects which arise from this, the unfortunate sufferers, unable to account for it in any other manner, refer to a complaint, whose best known symptoms are of a similar character; and without any idea of disgrace attaching to them for what has arisen most innocently, they jump to the conclusion that they have become contaminated by an unfortunate contact with some affected individual. This is one reason, also, of the very various remedies popularly employed; for many of the cases, as I have observed, not having the least taint of syphilis, when a rapid recovery takes place by the use of any simple cathartic, a reputation is immediately gained for it, as being a certain cure for the presumed obstinate disease for which it has been taken, and which it has so readily sub-

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dued. Many vegetables in this manner are considered to be most efficacious in this disease, without the least claim to it, farther, than being gentle aperients and generally, in consequence, having a beneficial influence upon the human frame. On many such mistaken cases, the effect of blue pill was most wonderful, and it was a general observation with the medical officers of the Embassy, the remarkable efficiency of this remedy upon the Abyssinian human system, when, if its cause had been examined into, it would have been found that its simple alterative effects, producing a healthy reaction, was all that was required to establish a healing process very rapidly in the numerous cases of common ulcers, that were prescribed for under the impression that they proceeded from one sole cause: that a universal syphilitic taint characterized the whole population of Shoa.

The Abyssinians, immoral as they appear to be, are much more simple than depraved. It is the virtuous confidence of people afflicted with the *reputed* complaint, conscious of having no improper cause to attribute it to, and still, in their ignorance, believing it to be syphilis, which has given support to the general opinion among them of its extremely contagious character, and which has occasioned that apparent shamelessness with which this disreputable and distressing disease is spoken of by all classes and conditions.

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The most generally employed remedy, for common purposes, by the inhabitants of Shoa, is the flowers and unripe seeds of the *Hagenia Abyssinica*, called by them "Cosso." Bruce gives us a good description, and was the first who directed the attention of Europeans to this remarkable tree. In Shoa it grows frequently to the height of fifty feet. About one half of the way up the Tchakkah ascent, it flourishes remarkably well. It appears to be a short-lived tree. Of its wood the Negoos has all his gun-stocks manufactured, as it approaches nearly in colour to that employed for the same purposes in the European firearms he possesses. The wood, however, is far from being strong; but whilst the colour satisfies the eye of the monarch, the workmen he employs find it is well adapted, by its soft nature, to their tools, and its excellence for the purposes required is therefore never questioned, except by the unfortunate gunman, who, when the stock of his piece is fractured by any accident, must submit to a stoppage in his rations or pay, until its value has been reimbursed to the monarch, who always takes this method of ensuring carefulness as regards valuable property.

The cosso tree, as was remarked by Bruce, does not grow below a certain elevation, which is about eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, in the 10th degree of latitude north of the equator. It is a very beautiful tree in appearance, and, I

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think, would grow very well in England. Its leaves are largely pennated, and of a lively green colour; a great deal brighter than the foliage of the chesnut-tree, which, in figure, the cosso somewhat approaches to, except that it is not quite so high. The flowers are of a blood red colour, and hang in large bunches, sometimes a foot or a foot and a half long, consisting of numerous small flowerets attached to one common footstalk. Amidst the bright green leaves of the tree, these drooping crimson masses have a very picturesque appearance. Cosso-trees do not seem to be so carefully cultivated at the present day in the country to the west of Tchakkah, as they appear to have been when the Sara and Durra Galla tribes occupied the country between the Barissa and Angolahlah. We find them now generally marking the sites of former Galla villages. On riding off the road on one occasion to examine a group of these trees, a civil herdsman conducted Walderheros and myself into a cave of some extent where cattle used formerly to be kept by the Galla, whom I then learned, in this situation had their principal town.

The fruit of the cosso is gathered for medicinal purposes before the seeds are quite ripe, and whilst still a number of the flowerets remain unchanged. The bunches are suspended in the sun to dry, and if not required for immediate use deposited in a jar. Cosso is taken in considerable quantities to

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the market, where it is disposed of in exchange for grain or cotton, a handful of the latter, or a drinking-hornful of the former, purchasing sufficient for two doses, two large handsful. When taken, this medicine is reduced upon the mill to a very fine powder, having previously been well dried in the sun upon a small straw mat, upon which from some superstitious reason or other, several bits of charcoal are placed. The largest drinking-horn being then produced, the powdered cosso is mixed with nearly a pint of water, and, if it can be obtained, a large spoonful of honey is also added. When everything is quite ready, a naked sword is placed flat upon the ground, upon which the patient stands. The nurse then takes between two bits of sticks, as a substitute for tongs, a small bit of lighted charcoal, and carries it around the edge of the vessel three times, mumbling a prayer, at the end of which the charcoal is extinguished in the medicine, which is immediately drank off by the patient, who all this time has been pulling most extraordinary faces, expressive of his disgust for the draught. The operation is speedy and effectual, and to judge by the prostration of strength it occasioned in my servants, when they employed this medicine, it must be dreadfully severe. I can answer for this, that it occasions frequent miscarriages, often fatal to the mother, and even men have been known, after a large dose, to have died the same day from its consequences. I am, therefore, surprised at the noise this remedy

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has occasioned the last few years in Europe, as if it promised to be a valuable addition to our Materia Medica. This, I conceive, can never be, for no civilized stomach could bear the bulk of the drug necessary to produce its effects. Even in Abyssinia it is but barely tolerated, and let another remedy, equally efficacious for dislodging tape-worm be introduced into that country, and the use of cosso will be soon abandoned. In fact, several other vegetable productions are now employed to escape the punishment of a dose of this violent cathartic. Among many I could enumerate, but without any benefit arising from the list, is the "kolah," the same berry which is used in making the "barilla" tedge, also the red berries of a climbing plant called "inkoko," growing in the forest at the foot of the hill of Kundi, near Michael wans. These are swallowed whole, like pills, but a very great number are required to produce the desired results.

Besides the use of the cold bath, employed in the manner I have before related, and which may be of considerable benefit in some diseases, I have no notes upon any other medical treatment employed by the Shoans, excepting that from which I derived considerable benefit in my intermittent; the vapour bath, prepared by putting several species of odoriferous herbs, such as wormwood, rue, bergamot, and some others in boiling water, and then placing the vessel beneath a large tobe, I was wrapt up in,

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and which was securely fastened around my neck and in front, to prevent the escape of the vapour of the medicated decoction. This kind of bath was always followed by profuse perspiration, and assisted materially to relieve the violence of reaction in the hot stage, by accelerating that relaxation of the pores of skins which marks the return of something like comfort to the suffering patient.

August 8*th*.—Felt a great deal better after the cupping, and even proposed, as the Negoos was now at his palace at Michael wans, about six miles distant from Aliu Amba, that either on the morrow or the next day after, I should take the gunpowder which we had begun very early this morning to manufacture. Tinta sent me a good pair of English scales, several wooden mortars, and two handmills, with a party of labourers, consisting of eighteen or twenty men and boys. One request he made was, that as he desired to learn how to make gunpowder, I would not, therefore, commence weighing and mixing the ingredients till he could come to me.

My garden now exhibited a lively scene, several men standing around huge mortars two feet and a half high, made out of the round trunks of trees, and pounding the charcoal, or else the saltpetre into fine powder. The pestles consisted of heavy pieces of wood three feet long, which were generally kept going up and down by two men standing opposite each other, and who were relieved three or

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four times in the course of an hour. Several others were on their knees upon the ground, leaning over coarse flat stones, grinding the sulphur beneath another heavy one they moved about with the hands. Some hours were employed in this occupation, for it was long before the several materials were reduced to a sufficiently fine powder to commence mixing them together. It was too much to expect such another fortunate accident, by which the supply of charcoal had been obtained, and as I knew quite as little of the manufacture of gunpowder, I was very much afraid I should fail in this attempt also; I determined, however, it should not be for want of pounding, and to encourage the men, sent Wallata Gabriel with an ahmulah to purchase some ale.

Tinta came very soon after, and with him, a learned scribe, who had been desired by the Negoos to watch the proceedings, and mark the proportionate amounts of saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur, I used. The scales were produced, and then it was discovered there were no weights, but this difficulty I soon got over by employing bullets, and having duly apportioned the necessary amount of each ingredient, they were thrown together into the largest mortar, with water sufficient to make a stiff paste. A second pounding match now commenced, for to do the business effectually, I divided the mass into three portions, which I placed in separate mortars, and set as many couples at work again.

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The constant fear, that the whole party was now in, was most ludicrous. I was scarcely permitted to sit a moment—here, I was wanted—there, I must go and look, and the other mortar would, perhaps, be actually deserted; and all arose from a suspicion that an explosion would take place; water was continually being added, and the least approach to friableness frightened the workmen, as if a hot cinder was about to be thrown into a barrel of dry gunpowder. However, I managed to keep them to their guns until sunset, when they were discharged, without any casualty, from the dangerous duty; for which, I don't know, if the Negoos has not rewarded some of them for military service.

After Tinta, scribe, and all were gone, then my anxious moments came as to my success. A small quantity being taken out of the mortar, was placed upon paper near the fire, and soon drying, Walderheros had the immortal honour of firing the first sample, which flashed off in the most approved manner, much to the delight of Wallata Gabriel, and Goodaloo, and in fact, of us all, and more especially of myself, as I least expected it.

August 9.—Tinta was at my house, as soon as it was light, and as I had put the evening before a small portion of the damp powder in the fragment of a jar, and placed it among the warm ashes of the hearth, sufficient for two charges, was quite dry and ready for proofing when he came. I soon loaded my double-barrelled carabine, and

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having examined the nipples of the locks, covered them with caps. The shoulder-bone of an ox was our make-shift target, and each taking a shot at the distance of about forty yards, both of us were successful in perforating it with the balls.

It was now determined, that Tinta should provide me with a mule, and that next day I should follow him to Michael wans, usually pronounced Myolones, to bring the gunpowder and present it to the Negoos. Accordingly, Walderheros returned with Tinta to his house, and after some hours brought me back a mule; during which time, I and Goodaloo, dividing the powder into small portions, dried them well before a low red fire of the spare charcoal. The temerity of the latter was extraordinary, but it was quite in keeping with the silent steady manner he always performed any service I required. The large grains of the powder being afterwards forced through a sifting basket of grass, used in fining flour, I then secured it in a quart bottle I happened to possess; and which it about two-thirds filled.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Start for Myolones.—Account of the road.—Effect of the Earthquake.—Dangerous passage.—Ford the Gindebal wans.—Dubdubhee.—Reach Myolones.—Remarks upon taking possession of the land.

August 10*th*.—It had rained very heavily all night, and as the sky was covered with clouds, I did not feel inclined to go to Myolones. Walderheros, however, had set his mind upon it, and as the ride was a very short one, and might, perhaps, be of service in many respects, I at last consented. Walderheros had the mule ready before I could change my mind, and giving some precautions to Wallata Gabriel to look after everything well whilst we were away, and to let no one enter the house upon any pretence, off we started, Goodaloo running before, with the skin containing my bed-clothes upon his head, and Walderheros following slowly after me, having in special charge the very precious bottle of gunpowder.

We proceeded along the narrow arid winding path, that leads down the steep western slope of the rock of Aliu Amba. Here the road is deeply worn in the hard stone, so as to form a kind of

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hollow way, upon each bank of which thick bushes of a large strong-leaved plant, meeting above the head of the traveller, forms an umbrageous tunnel, nearly impervious to the sun's rays. At the bottom of the descent we crossed a stream, yellow with suspended earth, for, like most other rivers of Shoa, during the wet season, its running water is an active agent of denudation. We now slowly ascended the opposite bank of the valley, and passing through the little Christian village upon its summit, called Aitess, we then again descended to the level of another stream, along whose miry banks, crossing and re-crossing it several times in its tortuous course, we at length reached, where, in a narrow cascade, the water falls suddenly the distance of two hundred feet, with the usual rushing din of an impetuous torrent. Here the bald face of a rock, across which not the trace of a road could be perceived, projected a smooth surface of compact stone, from beneath a super stratum of a loose schistose formation of several hundred feet high, whilst below us appeared an almost perpendicular wall, with just such a sliding inclination as suggested an idea of the bridge said to be situated by some Orientalists between heaven and earth, for there required scarcely the impetus of a wish, to have slipped from life to death during the walk across. The earthquake that ushered in the rains had occasioned this obliteration of the road, for the effects of some thousands of tons of the overlying

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detritus which had been detached, with bare skeleton branches of overturned trees protruding amongst the ruins, were visible over the devastated fields of vetches and horse-beans that occupied the bottom of the large valley into which we had opened, where the stream we had previously kept along, fell over the waterfall into this the bed of the principal tributary of the Dinkee river. This fallen earth, scattered far and wide, had converted the green appearance of large tracts of cultivated lands, with the crops far advanced, to the condition and character of a freshly ploughed fallow.

I halted when I arrived at the dangerous pass, to see if there were not another passage somewhere else, and looked up and down, but saw no way available but the one back again, which, as I had come so far, I did not choose to take, so at once put the question of its practicability to my mule by urging her forward, willing to depend upon instinct not leading the animal into a position, where she was not perfectly satisfied that her preservation was well assured. The termination of the road, where its continuity had been swept away by the landslip, was opposite and in sight; and with this encouragement, and perhaps satisfied, that her rider was a reasonable creature, and would not attempt anything impracticable, the mule did not hesitate the least, and on my intimation to proceed, began carefully to place her feet, one after the other, on

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the sloping rock, and slowly entered upon the death-inviting scene. After we had started, and it was impossible to come back, as usual I began to think of the value of life, and the little courage that man really has, just sufficient to make him take the first step into peril, and then, from despair, or the recklessness of a suicide, bear himself up against all contingencies, and comes out a brave man if he lives, with the certainty of being thought a wretched fool if he is killed. With teeth set, and eyes fixed upon the yawning gulph on one side, I muttered to my mule, as if she had been my murderess, "my blood be upon your head," and to her folly, not my own, attributed my present perilous position. Once I looked upon the other side, but there, overhanging, as if suspended by the air which it projected into, was the high black wall of the loose angular fragments of an easily fractured schistose rock, which seemed as if a thousand ton torrent of stones was suspended only whilst I passed, to follow in one rush of ruin the land-slip which, but a few mornings before, had been detached and precipitated into the foaming river below, carrying along with it many acres of jowarhee and cotton plantations. My carefully slow mule seemed to invite the catastrophe, and it was long after I had really passed the horrible ordeal, before the conscience-stirring scene lost its repentant effect upon my mind.

Having got safely over this delicate pass of

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about one hundred yards long, I turned round to look after Walderheros. I found he had not dared to attempt it until he saw that I had reached the end of the road, when he came cautiously along, making no reply to my loud shout of caution that he should take care of the bottle. He looked perfectly satisfied, however, when he saw himself landed upon sound ground again, after a little spring over the two or three last feet of the distance, impatient even then of peril impending. Away we went, talking over the rash feat, and determined not to come back that way again if we could help it. A little reaction, too, consequent upon the excitement had taken place, and I no longer felt fatigued as I had done before, but proceeded in much better spirits. The hill, or a prolonged height of Lomee, was now crossed, covered almost entirely with fields of the common horse-bean, whose grey blossoms perfumed the whole neighbourhood. Generally, the fields were quite green with young grain but a few inches high, and through these our road lay for nearly an hour, when, by a gradual descent, we found ourselves upon the edge of a coarse gravel bank, that in this situation had been cut into a perpendicular cliff, about thirty feet high, by the action of the confined, impetuous river that rushed around its base. The river is here called "Gindebal wans," the tree-eating stream, and is singularly characteristic, like most other Abyssinian names of

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localities. Here, in the little reaches that alternated with rough stone waterfalls, were numerous trunks of the sigbar, ted, and "*waira*," or wild olive tree, which had been brought down from the forests that surround its remotest sources. Through the dark green mass of foliage could be observed, in several places, broadly cut channels, produced by the crashing boulders from the edge of the table land behind, detached by the late earthquake, and it is such an agent, rather than the denuding effect of the stream itself, that occasions such vast numbers of these trees that are annually floated down the "Gindebal wans."

I considered that it would be hopeless to attempt fording this stream, for although above it widened considerably, and was spread over a rocky cascade, still between the huge stones that there appeared above its surface, wide channels existed, and however shallow the water might be, the swiftness of the current would have turned a man over like a leaf. At all events the mule would not take me over, and so I sat down whilst Walderheros was looking out for the ford, leaping from stone to stone, and instructed by Goodaloo, who, on the other side, was shouting out directions, which were very indistinctly heard amidst the noise of the torrent. His appearance alone demonstrated the possibility of the passage, but seeing him in a very short time joined by Walderheros,

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who, for a few moments had disappeared, I got up to see what success I might have. Walderheros having given the bottle containing the gunpowder to Goodaloo, returned to assist me, and I soon found that by a very indirect mode of progress, successively leaping in different directions, the opposite bank was being gained. The mule came clattering after me, jumping like a cat, her four feet occupying sometimes the summit of a stone not the size of a dinner-plate, and sometimes scratching up on to a high rock, as if she had strong claws rather than smooth horny hoofs. I kept a sharp look out behind, for though she was making use of me as a guide, she came so fast that, occasionally, a very summary kind of ejectment precipitated me forward, to make room for her upon the stone.

After reaching the opposite bank we all sat down to rest ourselves, previous to commencing an ascent before us, that if not so steep, seemed to promise to be as long as that of Tchakkah. As I looked up I could not help expostulating with Walderheros for having persuaded me, ill as I was, to undertake a journey which I had calculated would only occupy me an hour, and here we had now been that time, and by his own confession we were not half way yet. Some consolation was afforded by the sun breaking out, and enlivening me by its warmth and brightness. I mounted my mule again, and with a desperate resignation faced the rugged steep. Half an hour we were climbing

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this stone ladder before we reached the little town upon its summit, called Dubdubhee. In one of the best houses the mother of Walderheros lived, so here it was resolved to stay and breakfast, having, after the usual Abyssinian custom, brought the meal with us. Of course, I alone partook, as the observance of the fast required my servants to abstain from food until evening.

The mother of Walderheros lived with a second husband, by whom she had had several children. Her first husband, the father of Walderheros, occupied a farm a short distance from Myolones, and he also had married again, and had another numerous family by his second wife; so what between both parents, my servant was very well off for parental and fraternal relations, a thing, too, which he considered to be a great advantage; especially as all parties were still on the very best of terms.

From Dubdubhee, the road to Myolones was along a narrow ridge, similar, in many respects, to that in front of Ankobar, and it was not until the shallow circular valley of Myolones spread below us in full sight, that we commenced a short descent into it; having first passed close to the side of the grove of the new church of St. Michael, the cone-like thatched roof of which was terminated by a wooden cross, on the top, and on the two arms of which were fixed ostrich eggs; these eggs, by-the-by, are favourite ornaments of Abyssinian churches; one that I had

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brought up to Shoa with me from the Adal country had been begged from me by Tinta, who presented it as a desirable offering, to the priests of the church of St. George, on the road from Aliu Amba to Ankobar.

The palace, a number of long thatched residences, enclosed by a strong stockade, and surrounded with ted and wild olive trees, occupied the left side of the valley, as we approached from the east. A little spur, projecting into the valley, affords a convenient perch, and the side opposite to us was dotted with white tobed courtiers, and numerous individuals passing and repassing, formed a lively scene. The heights of Kundi and Mamrat behind, enveloped in fogs, and the sun struggling through a thick bank of clouds, made everything seem uncomfortable, which impression was aided considerably when I dismounted, and found I had to walk some distance up the palace hill on a moist, soddy turf, that seemed to hold water like bog-moss.

My arrival was soon notified to the Negoos whilst I was invited into a large new building of the usual character, constructed outside of the palace enclosures, and which was intended for the accommodation of the numerous train of attendants, guards, and guests that now followed his Majesty; and which, having greatly increased by the successes of his arms and his reputation for wisdom, had rendered it necessary to enlarge considerably all the royal residences since he had come to the

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throne. The palace of Myolones, however, had been erected for his own use, numbers of individuals having been dispossessed of their holdings to make room for this favourite retirement of Sahale Selassee; for once or twice during the year the ordinary public business is suspended, and here the monarch indulges in a short relaxation for fourteen or fifteen days.

As I was told two or three times of the manner in which the people who previously held the land had been driven from Myolones, I made particular inquiries to learn if any injustice had marked this course, for I felt naturally so inclined to respect the character of Sahale Selassee, that I was jealous of allowing myself to be deceived by false appearances, into the belief that he was the admirable character I could not help taking him to be.

Walderheros' own father was one of those who were thus ejected, but when I asked him what return he had received, said promptly that his present farm had been given to him in exchange, and seemed perfectly satisfied with the conduct of the Negoos. Goodaloo also represented that every one so removed was more than compensated for their loss. I had, therefore, no reason to suppose that the fair fame of Sahale Selassee had been tarnished at all by this transaction, for although any opposition to the wishes of the Negoos would, I have no doubt, have been severely punished, and summary ejectment have been enforced, yet I do not

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see how any frail human being, educated a despotic monarch, could help feeling angry should his presumed rights be questioned in such a manner by a subject. I contend, therefore, that no injustice was committed in the apparently arbitrary taking possession of the valley of the Michael wans, when the previous possessors of the land were remunerated, as that is all our own Parliament demands on the occasion of carrying out any public works.

When William Rufus formed the New Forest in Hampshire, his situation and circumstances were as nearly parallel as possible with those of the present King of Shoa, yet we are told that he did not observe towards the ejected inhabitants, that justice which characterized the proceedings of the Abyssinian monarch.

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CHAPTER XIX.

Examination of the gunpowder.—Tinta in disgrace.—The remedy.—The scribes, or dupteraoitsh.—Their mode of writing.—Audience with the Negoos.—Memolagee.—College of priests.—My new residence.—Night of storm.—Uncomfortable situation.—Weather clears up.

I DECLINED taking a seat in the waiting-room outside the palace-courts, as I thought that by being reported waiting at the gate, I might be called sooner to an audience with the Negoos. It was not long before Tinta, who had already arrived at the palace, came to inform me that after some little business was concluded with the superior of the Church in Shoa, the Negoos would see me. A crowd of idle courtiers had now surrounded me, amusing themselves with the gunpowder, tasting it, smelling it, and giving their opinion, and questioning Walderheros how it was made. A judicious silence, however, obtained for my servant the credit of knowing fully how it was prepared; he was wise enough to keep his ignorance to himself, and then, as he remarked afterwards, nobody knew anything about it. Tinta had also got something to ask me, but as it was very private, and there was no other

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place to retreat to, he spoke to the outer gate-keeper, who admitted us both into the intervening space between the only two stockades which surround the palace of Myolones. Walderheros and the King's scribe, who had been sent to take notes of the process and relative weights of the different articles used in manufacturing gunpowder, also accompanied us, and I then found that my system of weights and measures, by leaden bullets and table-spoonsful had quite bothered them; and a most extraordinary report of the business had been drawn up, which the Negoos soon detected to be erroneous, and had expressed himself very dissatisfied with them. They therefore now applied to me to assist them in their dilemma, and we accordingly sat down upon some large stones, and occupied ourselves for some time in getting a proper statement written down to restore the Negoos to good humour, and my two friends again into favour.

A scribe, or "duptera," as he is called in Shoa, appears to be an inferior order of priest, at least it is their first degree, and which is acquired by merely being able to read and write; nor is it requisite to pay a visit to Gondar, the seat of the Abune, or Bishop of all Abyssinia, as is the case when priests are to be ordained. The usual occupation of the scribes is principally to transcribe manuscripts for the Negoos, who has a most extraordinary desire to be possessed of copies of all the

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works in the Geez language, and to procure which, or, if possible, the originals themselves, he expends annually a considerable sum. These manuscript books are all written upon parchment, and bound, most frequently, into a volume about the size of a folio. The backs are made of two thin boards, covered with red leather, which is ornamented very tastefully by borders and designs impressed by iron stamps; and for the means they have at their disposal, the Abyssinians produce in this manner very creditable specimens of book-binding. For farther protection, it is usual to have a small leathern case, which receives the book, and a flap strapped down then secures it from all accidents.

When engaged writing, the duptera sits upon the ground, takes from out of his girdle an ink-horn, the tapering extremity of which being reduced to a kind of spike, he sticks into the earth by his side. The ink is a composition of powdered charcoal and gum arabic or myrrh, with a little water, and a very permanent ink is thus produced. I may observe, that excepting in the manufacture of ink, the Abyssinians of Shoa have no other use for the gum myrrh, and I have frequently been asked, "What else could it be used for?" As for using this gum as medicine themselves, or giving it for that purpose to their cattle or horses, they have no idea of any such thing; neither have the Dankalli, from whose country it is brought into Shoa.

Having placed his ink-horn in the earth, the

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scribe then produces a small leathern case, in which he generally carries a supply of parchment, a few reed pens, and a large pair of scissors, to clip off the ridiculously small pieces of parchment upon which the Shoans write their ordinary letters, which have not, sometimes, a surface of more than one inch. A pen being formed, it is carefully examined by thumb-nail and eye, and is then either nibbled, to make it soft, or if it be too soft already, it is made finer by means of a large dinner-knife, which is generally carried in a small slip, in the scabbard of the crooked sword that curls its point nearly up to the shoulder of the right side, on which it is always worn. Everything being arranged, the parchment is held fast upon the knee by one hand, whilst the long and careful inscription is being made. The process of writing the shortest note is a very tedious one, for every letter is a capital, and although the Geez character, as a syllabic alphabet, is the most correct of any with which I am acquainted, and best suited for conveying exact sounds, still the required attention to the proper situation of the small vowel points, occasions considerable delay.

Having given Tinta the required information, which was all carefully written down by the duptera, they left Walderheros and myself for a few moments, whilst they went in to the Negoos, with the improved report. In a very few minutes Tinta returned, and beckoning for me to come, as he appeared at the

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wicket in the second enclosure, I got up, and followed by Walderheros, entered the inner court, where I found the Negoos reposing upon a couch placed on one side of the porch, that leads into the principal apartment of the palace. All the buildings were of the same description as those of the other Royal residences, consisting of a wall of splintered ted, six or seven feet high, plastered inside with common red clay, and thatched. Outside from the projecting eaves were hung in great numbers, the disgusting trophies of Abyssinian warfare stuffed with dry grass.

My memolagee, on the occasion of this visit was, the gunpowder, which, although Tinta had carried it in previously, with the written account of the mode of preparing it, had been returned to Walderheros, so that I might deliver it in person. The usual Arab word "*kaphanter*," did duty for "How do you do?" and, disfigured as the countenance of the monarch is by one sightless orb, which is more striking from its mottle pearly hue, contrasting with the dark brown colour of his face, still, I consider, the expression of the monarch's features to be pleasing and good-natured. He received the bottle containing the gunpowder, and uncorking it, poured out a little into the palm of his hand, and examined it attentively, and evidently with the eye of a man of business. Sahale Selassee, in fact, is particularly interested in the production of a good article of the kind, as, could

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he command a good supply of gunpowder, he would, I am convinced, greatly extend his conquests. After some examination, he pronounced it to be genuine; and I then found that he questioned, or at least, suspected, that it might be adulterated. A previous traveller had attempted to practise upon the Negoos, by representing as having been made in Shoa, some gunpowder he had brought with him from Europe, and who had been detected by the knowledge of a little fact, which it had been presumed, that the clever monarch was not aware of. The saltpetre obtained in Shoa, although very plentiful, abounds with another salt, that not decomposing by explosion leaves a residium of white globules which, besides fouling the barrels of the guns, deteriorates, considerably, the exploding effects of the powder; so much so, that an ordinary charge for a common musket, is two or three large handsful, and it is nothing unusual to see the ram-rod, after loading, projecting twelve, or even eighteen inches beyond the muzzle. The presence of this salt occasions the powder to be of a very light grey colour, not unlike wood-ashes. From not possessing any chemical tests, I was unable to decide its mineral character, but I supposed it to be the nitrate of soda.

Besides the gunpowder, I had taken with me, not as a memolagee, but as a present for the Queen, a beautifully worked black lace veil, which had been made for a very different per-

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sonage, and for a more suitable character, a bright-eyed daughter of Spain. Not, however, having been thrown upon the southern coast of that country during the past three years, and considering it was not very likely that I should be for the next two or three more, I determined to return the politeness of the Queen of Shoa, by presenting it to her, as she had sent me presents of wheaten bread, with inquiries after my health, several times during the last month. Of course, I had no chance of giving it into her own hands as, like all the other of the Royal wives and concubines, she is carefully secluded from the gaze of ordinary mortals. Her name, *Bashabish*, conveys a compliment of no little meaning, being literally, "By thee I have increased," which alludes to the two sons with which she has blessed Sahale Selassee; the elder, named Hylo Malakoot, and the younger, Safie Selassee, or the "Sword of the Trinity," as his father's name signifies the "Given of the Trinity." The latter is the favourite son, and as the crown is not hereditary, but the King nominates his successor; as David, we are told, in like manner, chose his son Solomon, above all his elder brethren; so, to all appearances, Safie Selassee, on the demise of his father, will succeed to the throne in prejudice to his brother. Besides these children, the Negoos has one or two daughters by his favourite wife, Bashabish.

When I presented the veil, it created quite a commotion, for its novel texture and the em-

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broidered pattern surprised and gratified the Negoos exceedingly. He threw it over his face to look through it, tried the strength of the thread, and seemed much amused at the idea of its being merely a "*guftah*" (woman's head dress), for he had taken it to be intended for some dignitary of the Church, to be worn over the shoulders. However, the usual "Egzeer ista," and what I required from him, being asked, after I had stated that I had only to return my thanks for the house he had given to me, and had no request to make, the usual abrupt recommendation of me to the care of Heaven, and "you may go," terminated the interview.

I was not taken back to the shed outside the palace courts, but into a much more comfortable apartment between the two stockades, where I found several priests sitting upon the ground on low chairs, employed perusing a book themselves, or attending to some boys, who, in the usual school tone, were practising a reading lesson, that I was told soon after I went in was a chapter of St. Luke. A few pupils were also receiving their first instructions in writing. It appeared that this was a religious institution connected with the palace, being the residence of these priests, who about midnight begin chanting their orisons, and keep the howling concert up until daylight. How it is possible for the Negoos, or any one residing within ear-shot of them, to sleep, I do not know, but I do not exaggerate when I say, that to my ears their holy

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exercises sounded a deal more inhuman, than the noise made by a pack of famished wolves. The priests, however, appeared a good-natured set, and soon spread an oxskin upon the loose dry grass, that appeared to be collected in large quantities for the purpose of forming soft beds for the holy fathers, all of whom, with their pupils, occupied this thatched apartment. I considered that it formed a good counterpart of the character of the college of Oxford in the days of King Alfred, and looked with interest upon its inmates, when I reflected, that probably their habits and feelings assimilated with those of the earliest teachers of our celebrated University.

A bright fire of wood crackled upon the low hearth, and I threw myself upon my littered couch by its side. No inducement existed to tempt me into the open air, for the sky had now become covered with low grey clouds, whilst a heavy mist hid the high romantic cliffs of Kundi, that close around the head of the valley of Myolones. Sometimes a puff of wind rolled along before it, a huge cloud of the condensed moisture, that for a few minutes enveloped the precincts of the palace in a dense fog. A thought of rain, however, did not trouble me, for I was in most comfortable quarters, on very good terms with the learned monks, and as Walderheros had been sent for to the palace, and returned with two bottles of the barilla tedge, I enjoyed myself exceedingly.

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"A change came o'er the spirit of the dream," for towards evening I began to feel exceedingly hungry, and urged Walderheros to prepare me something to eat, as not only had bread, honey, butter, onions, and, in fact, everything required to make a sumptuous repast, been sent from the palace, but a sheep also. I soon learnt that the reluctance on this occasion shewn by my servant to do as I desired him was, that the present time being a strict fast, the monks would not allow their place to be desecrated by anything like food being cooked in it. Not relishing the poor fare which, it seems, they are restricted to during this fast of fourteen days, I sent Walderheros to the palace requesting an indulgence; and in about half an hour he came back, bringing with him Goodaloo, who had remained outside all this time with the crowd of retainers and servants, who are not allowed the privilege of the entrée of the palace. They soon collected my bed-clothes and presents, having intimated to me that a fresh place had been appointed, where I could have the sheep killed and cook whatever I liked.

The monks were anxious that I should understand that it was public principle alone that occasioned their apparent inhospitality, and I readily excused it; for they could not have consistently enforced a strict observance of the fast among the household of the Negoos, and yet have allowed animals to have been slaughtered in their presence, and flesh meat cooked under their roof.

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Tinta, as usual, appeared with his servants to superintend my removal, and after passing out of the outer gate and through the little belt of ted and wild olive trees that encircle the palace, we proceeded a short distance down the valley, where were three or four tents pitched, and I then saw one of these was intended for me. My illness, however, had made me rather particular, and instantly I saw that I was about to be quartered in such a residence as that, I objected, pointing very feelingly to the sloppy spongy turf, and the dirty-looking clouds that floated lazily above our heads. At the request of Tinta, however, I went to look at the accommodations, and was certainly better satisfied, when I found that one larger tent outside enclosed a very snug new one, leaving a large space between the two surfaces. Besides, a high and very commodious alga, or bedstead, had been brought, so that, excepting from the vapour rising from the moist earth, I could be in no danger of being exposed to any damp, and feeling pleased at the arrangements that had been made for my comfort, I raised no more objections, but took my place upon the bed, and after a bright fire had been lighted upon a temporary hearth of large stones, Tinta and his train departed, leaving me to enjoy myself, until Walderheros should have prepared supper, by reading a pocket volume of "Childe Harold" I had brought with me.

It was not long after the sun had set behind a

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high bank of clouds than a drizzling rain came on, and although I did not like this symptom of a wet night, I was satisfied by Goodaloo going and procuring a hoe, with which he soon pecked up, around the outside tent, a large gutter to carry off, and thus prevent the water that might fall, spreading over the floor inside. After seeing this done, and partaking of supper, I soon fell fast asleep, as comfortably as if I had remained in the warm close-thatched residence of my learned friends.

Before midnight, however, the storm that had been brewing the two or three days previously around the cliffs of Aramba, Kundi, and Mamrat, progressed gradually but rapidly to its fullest development. The Scotch mist of the evening increased to a sharp rain, which soon after came down as if the windows of heaven had opened, and another deluge was approaching; in a very short time, not only were both tents soaking, but before I awoke even, every article of clothing I had on was completely wet through. The fire, fortunately, had been kept in, and a large bundle of wood having been placed between the two tents, we were in no fear of being left without that comfort. The first thing, when I awoke to the misery of my situation, was to send Walderheros to the house situated outside of the palace stockade, but he could get no attention paid to his representations, they were all as bad off, they said, as myself, the new roof of their apartment letting

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in water at every part. He was equally unsuccessful at the palace, for no one could be made to hear the loud summons at the outer gate, the cold and rain having driven in the wardens to some retreat, and probably amidst the noise of the tempest man's voice was lost; so Walderheros, after some time, returned to the tent unsuccessful, and nearly half drowned.

The night would have just suited Byron, provided he had been wrapt up in some good macintoshes, for now increased the fierce contention of the elements of fire and water. Thunder in the distance boomed heavily, and, quick as the blow of wrath, its dinning *rat tat* seemed to break the electric cloud directly over head; whilst bright leaping flashes of the most vivid lightning pierced the darkness of tempest and of night with a moment's triumph. Like a bright spear-head glaring for an instant upon a broad buckler of dingy hide, night's darkness, more darkly opposed the recoiling shaft of light, and the muttering echo of the retiring peal, seemed to curse the innoxious effect of its spent force upon earth and her inhabitants.

I sat upon my heels shivering in the middle of my rude bedstead, where the concavity that formed by my weight being in the centre of my hide mattress, made a good pickling tub, and I was very soon ankle deep in a pool of water, whilst to increase the pleasantness of our situation,

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the rain succeeded, against every endeavour to prevent it, in putting out the fire.

It was a sad night, and most uncomfortable were my forebodings, whilst Goodaloo, silent and stirless, never moved from the position he had taken after the last vain attempts to keep up a blaze. Walderheros seemed to talk faster the faster it rained, now anathematizing the lazy occupants of the outhouse, then trying to convince me of his superhuman efforts to arouse the gate-keepers of the palace, and sometimes consoling me with the truism that morning must come, and all would be well again. So far he was right, for after suffering nearly a martyrdom during the tedious progress of the early morning hours, no sooner did the light of day begin to appear than the persecuting element stayed its violence, and the recreant rain retired in misty fogs to its fastnesses among the heights in the rear of Myolones.

By sunrise the sky was nearly clear of clouds, birds were singing, and the noise of laughing men told of a reaction in nature, in which I could have gladly participated, but that I was well nigh exhausted, and could scarcely walk to the college of the monks, several of whom now came to beg that I would return to the shelter of their residence; where they said I might eat as much bread and "dillock" as I liked, without any further observation from them.

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CHAPTER XX.

Abyssinian dress.—Visit to the Negoos.—Inspection of fire-arms.—Congratulated on my reception.—Return to Aliu Amba.—A troublesome companion.—Pleasant beverage.—Market day.—Numerous visitors.—Home manufacture of cloth.

August 13*th.*—Every endeavour was now made by the worthy priests to obviate any ill effects from the exposure during the night; fresh billets were piled upon the hearth, and dry clothes being sent for from the palace, with Walderheros' assistance I was soon dressed as a southern Abyssinian. I did not look to advantage, certainly, in my new suit, for the *sennafil*, a pair of very loose petticoat drawers, fastened by a thick, but soft, cotton rope around my waist, left my white thin legs bare for more than a hand's-breadth above the knee. In lieu of my shirt the long *mekanet*, or girdle, a narrow band of cloth one cubit wide, and sometimes twenty or even thirty cubits long, was wrapt around my loins, being spread open over my chest, and behind almost as high as my shoulders. It is not usual for the Abyssinians to wear this in the house, but as I thought that I was not quite bound by their habits, considering my present

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weak state, I had put it on as a substitute for a shirt. Over all was thrown a most comfortable thick cloth of the softest cotton, more like a light blanket than anything else. This part of the dress, which is called *legumbigalla*, is about four times the size of a Scotch plaid, and worn very much in the same manner, but is an ordinary, not extraordinary, article of clothing, and is hardly ever off the shoulders of an Abyssinian, except when occupied in some laborious duty.

Being thus attired in the costume of the country, and having drank a bottle of the very strongest barilla tedge, I felt quite recovered, and in reply to a message from the Negoos, inquiring if I were well enough to wait upon him that morning; proposed going at once to the palace, as I was anxious, whilst under the influence of the reaction, to get over a considerable portion of the fatiguing road home.

It was ten o'clock, however, before a second messenger from the Negoos desired me to go immediately to see him, as he wanted me to give an opinion upon the respective merits of a number of rifles and other guns. Accordingly, on arrival at the palace, I was ushered into an inner apartment beyond the large central room, and which corresponded with the porch on the front side, where I had seen his majesty the day before. This opened, however, into a private court, at the farther end of which, was the house assigned to the female

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part of the royal household, as a residence. In the back porch, if I may so term it, therefore, I found the Negoos reclining upon a couch covered with a white cloth, and the usual yellow satin cushions at each end. He was in his customary dress, a large legumbigalla, like the one I had on, only ornamented with numerous bars of the red and blue shumlah, which adds considerably to the value of the cloth. He had also on his feet a pair of red Turkish slippers and white socks, the only European articles of dress he had adopted, and these he only wore in the palace; for whenever I have seen him in the fields around his palaces, he was always barefooted like his courtiers. I have often regretted that I, at that time, did not know how to knit, nothing would have pleased the monarch so much as to have learned the process, and seen growing beneath his fingers a well-formed stocking. In a cold country, situated like Abyssinia, knitting would be a most useful art to introduce among the natives, and I hope, therefore, if any traveller intending to visit that country reads this book, he will make himself acquainted with that mysterious accomplishment, which I can assure him is much easier than he may suppose.

Upon the ground before his Majesty lay some twenty or thirty fowling pieces and rifles, and several pages and attendants were bringing in others from the private armoury, where he keeps the more valuable of his fire-arms. An ox skin

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was brought and laid down for me to sit upon, and his Majesty then began to examine me in my knowledge of his language, but he soon got tired of conversing with me in my halting Amharic, and directing my attention to the guns, inquired of me to tell him which was the best among them; I knew very well that he was a much better judge than myself, and told him so, but unfortunately truth will never be believed in a court, and he supposed I was complimenting him, and insisted upon my pointing out the strongest, that he might take it with him on the next "*zemitchar*," or expedition against the refractory Galla tribes, which would be during the next month.

On looking over the very decent collection which he had made during his reign by the contributions of various travellers, who had visited his kingdom, I observed a rifle, manufactured by Theophilus Richards, of Birmingham, and pointed it out to the Negoos as having been made in the town I came from, and as being one of the best. He took it out of my hands as he said, "Agger sou?" (townsman?) and cocking and uncocking it, as if there had been music in the sound, remarked that it was his greatest favourite, and, as if, because I had come from the same neighbourhood, I must be a gunmaker, added, "You know all about guns, and when you are quite well, you must teach my servants how to make them."

After nearly an hour's conversation upon the

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same subject, he bid me "Good bye," in the usual abrupt manner, and I retired with Walderheros to the house of the monks, followed by Tinta, who had been present the whole of the interview, and who now congratulated me upon the position I stood in with regard to the Negoos. I certainly did not attach that importance to his friendship as he seemed to do, although I felt gratified at the attention my endeavours to serve him and his subjects appeared to command.

By the time we returned to the college, my wet clothes were all dried, and I soon divested myself of the Abyssinian costume and resumed my usual appearance.

There being, however, every prospect of the rain recommencing, we were all anxious to return to warm weather and Aliu Amba as soon as possible, and I only remained sitting with the priests until my mule was brought up. A large goat that had been royally fed with barley and salt for the king's own table, afforded a tiresome occupation to Walderheros and Goodaloo, as in turns they took the long rope attached to his horns, and endeavoured, much against his inclination, to drag him along with us. He was as large as a roebuck, and as contumacious and stiff-necked as well-fed beasts of all descriptions are apt to be. Now hanging behind, nothing but being positively carried up the steep miry hill could induce him to ascend to the top, but when arrived there, he

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afforded every assistance to my servants on the descent; beginning the war by rearing up on his hind legs, and with nose pressed down upon his chest, darted like a flying battering ram, upon his persecutors, who generally went to the bottom of the hill by one application of the sort. In this manner he compelled us to come to terms, and when we arrived at Dubdubhee, Walderheros left him in charge with his mother, who was to take every care of him for the few remaining days of the fast; at the conclusion of which, he was destined to form a prominent actor in the festivity, which it is usual among the Shoans to indulge in, the day after any term of abstinence has expired.

After remaining nearly all day at Dubdubhee, where my ague paroxysm came on, and obliged me to stay, we again started, and arrived at Aliu Amba a few hours before sunset, where I was right glad to lay myself comfortably down upon my own bed, and under my own roof. A bright fire soon blazed upon the hearth, and my first essay in the art of brewing was tested, a large gambo of tallah being brought out of the store recess, a small concavity being first made in the earthen floor, to receive its round bottom. The potent beverage was soon being decanted into large drinking-horns, and the value of misfortunes to heighten the enjoyment of succeeding pleasures, was demonstrated by the zest that the comforts of the night derived, from the recollection of the miseries of the last we had

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spent at Myolones. My teakettle, half filled with the ale, was soon heating over the fire, whilst eggs, and honey, and butter, in another vessel, were being mixed together for the manufactory of a certain beverage that Wallata Gabriel protested was to be a cure for my fever, whilst Walderheros, to expel the "saroitsh" that I understood had already taken possession of his hips and shoulders, drew from its hiding place his clumsy pipe. In the folds of his mekanet he soon found some tobacco, and breaking the hard cake in which it is dried into smaller pieces, charged the slightly excavated stone bowl, upon the top of which a glowing piece of charcoal was placed, and consolation and comfort in vast clouds soon spread through the close apartment.

The "moack," or egged ale, Wallata Gabriel now prepared for me, was a drink fit for the entertainment of the gods when, in the good old times, they made Abyssinia an annual visit, and from whom the knowledge of it must have been first derived. It consisted of two or three drinking-hornsful of strong tallah, as many eggs, and two large spoonsful of honey for each horn of beer. A little butter was added, when the mixture was boiling over the fire; that which, however, gave to it its pleasantest flavour was a small portion of a warm spice called *korareema*, a large kind of coriander, one inch and a-half long, which is brought from Guragué, and the spice country to the south. They are brought into Shoa by priests travelling to Gondah,

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the only individuals that can traverse in safety the different Galla tribes to the south of the Hawash, between their country and Shoa. Forty of these *korareema*, threaded upon a strong hempen string, may be purchased in Aliu Amba for an ahmulah, and in aromatic flavour are equal, I think, to the best nutmeg or cloves.

Drunk warm this "moack" was an excellent cordial, and I very soon got into the habit of concluding very pleasantly by its assistance many very uncomfortable days, either from circumstances or ill-health.

August 12th.—Market-day again in Aliu Amba, and as usual there was a deal of bustle in the town, and many visitors calling; however, the first duty to attend to after getting up was the important business of breakfast. This invariably consisted of a large teff crumpet which was fresh toasted in the frying-pan, and well overlaid with butter and honey. Coffee, having been scorched and pounded by Walderheros, whilst his wife attended to the bread, was boiled in an earthenware jar, and black and strong, was then poured into a cup which had at one time formed part of the canteen of Lieut. Barker. He had bestowed it upon an Islam friend of his, who resided in a neighbouring town, and who offered it to me in exchange for a small ounce phial, and a pomatum pot, which I had previously been obliged to drink out of for want of anything else. The flavour of the unsugared coffee, was

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rendered doubly agreeable by the honey, the cloying sweetness of which, subduing, and being subdued, by the bitterness of the berry, left the pleasant and peculiar aroma of the latter alone sensible to the palate.

Scarcely had I partaken of breakfast this morning, before patients and visitors from distant villages, coming to the market, and taking this opportunity of calling upon me, thronged around my house, and memolagees of eggs, butter, and fowls, would, if I had accepted them all, have most inconveniently occupied the floor of my house. Among others, the father of Wallata Gabriel came for some medicine he required, having long been labouring under a rheumatic affection of the hip. As an offering on the occasion, he brought the entire tapering trunk of a ted tree, more than fifteen feet long, which I had desired Walderheros to get me, for the purpose of manufacturing into an English chair, and also a pair of window frames, over which I intended to stretch a glaze of oiled parchment, and place in the outer wall of one of the recesses, to convert it into a study. Another daughter of his, named Wallata Selassee, assisted the old man in carrying the tree, and she brought me besides, a number of eggs tied up in the girdle around her waist.

These had not sat long, and before the old man had finished his doleful story, when another married daughter of his, her husband, Walder-

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Yoannes, and an infant, slung in the lady's tobe upon her shoulders, also arrived. They lived in the town of Lomee, a neighbouring height, visible from my garden, and about half-way between Aliu Amba, and Myolones, and coming to market with some grain, they came to my house, to stay for the day, with Wallata Gabriel. In accordance with Abyssinian custom, they had brought their provisions with them, a large roll of teff bread being taken out of the mekanet of Walder-Yoannes, and placed in charge of my housekeeper until after *tuzziart*, three o'clock, P.M., when, by the regulations of the canon law, they might make their first meal for the day. A pretty noisy party I had now collected about me, for they talked at the top of their voices, and had a great deal to say about one thing or another, and as they were invited to stay the whole day, and also to make my house their resting-place, on all other occasions of coming to Aliu Amba, they soon felt themselves quite at home.

The confused buzzing sound of the distant market, was audible at my house, and the cries of the different vendors hawking their wares, resounded along the narrow winding lanes. *Tut allishe ahmulah*, cotton in exchange for a salt-piece. *Burr allishe ahmulah*, silver in exchange for the same. *Gaisho allishe tut.* All being different cries, which, with many others, might be heard in all directions.

My female visitors remaining after their lords

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and masters had gone to the market, with the usual industry characteristic of the women of Shoa, they sat down upon the floor, and chatting away, commenced spinning cotton; for I had made up my mind to have a cloth woven at home, from the first operation of cleaning the cotton, to the weaving of the last bit of *shumlah*, in the ornamented extremity of the tobe. Walderheros had entered into the spirit of my wish, and had already exchanged some grain, which we did not require, for a quantity of raw cotton, as it is taken from the pods of the plant; in which state it is full of seeds, and other substances, that have to be separated by a simple process of cleansing I shall describe in another place. He had now gone to market upon the same business, to purchase more of the raw material, the value of three ahmulahs, or about thirty pound weight of cotton, being considered as sufficient for a cloth about eight yards long, and one cubit broad.

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CHAPTER XXI.

Spinning cotton.—Of police force of Shoa.—Mode of administering justice.—Priest lawyers.—Politics of Shoa.—French intrigues.—Different kinds of cotton.—Process of cleaning it.—Instruments used.—Return from market.

I LAY watching the cotton-spinners some time, thinking upon the effect produced in the human form by occupation, as I noticed that the arms of the whole party were the most beautifully moulded I had ever seen. I could attribute this general characteristic of Abyssinian women, to no other cause than the action and exercise dependent upon spinning, which requires both arms to be in constant motion, without any heavy labour being imposed at the same time. The white fleecy cotton, reposing like a wreath of snow upon the bronze red skin of the hand and wrist, is gradually carried to its farthest extent one way, whilst drawing from it the long slender thread, the other hand conducts, in an opposite direction, the short thin reed tipped with a piece of ivory or horn that forms the reel, which spinning as it hangs, its effect upon the thread depends upon the slowness or quickness with which the cotton is drawn out. Continued gentle exercise

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in some light occupation, would lead to somewhat similar effects in forming a beautiful arm, and I recommend it to my countrywomen, whom I certainly thought of when I made the observation in Aliu Amba.

An unfortunate Arab, named Allee Chous, one of the discharged servants of the mission, now came in. He had that morning been robbed of sixty-three ahmulahs, the last money he had in the world, and although he hoped to discover the thief, had nothing with which to purchase his next week's provision in the market. I understood the statement to be an appeal for assistance, and as I felt some sympathy for his situation, I gave him the last two salt-pieces I had in the house. Tinta coming in soon after, I made some inquiries respecting the police of Shoa, and learned that there was a regular body of men employed as thief-takers, called *Labarshoitsh*, who have an *ullica*, or superior, and form a portion of the royal household. They are agents of the King's commands alone, and it is not until directions have been given by him that they proceed to apprehend culprits. Thieves must therefore have been denounced by name before a *Labarshi* is sent upon his errand. The Negoos refuses to entertain charges where the accused parties are unknown, on the same plea that, according to Abyssinian ideas, the devil will be repulsed at the last day by our Saviour; on his demand for justice, the monks say he will be asked the names of the souls that belong to him, which,

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not being able to give, Jesus will then answer, "Begone from hence, for I know none of thine."

Most cases of theft, however, are not brought before the Negoos at all, but before the governors of the towns in which the crime has occurred, a summary kind of conviction takes place, the stolen articles being returned to the owner, and the property of the thief confiscated, who, if dissatisfied, can make an appeal to the Negoos; but in that case he must have very good evidence of innocence, or he will, in addition to the loss of his property, receive a severe flogging, commonly inflicted by the Labarshi, at the gate of the inner court of the palace, where the Negoos, if he pleases, may see the punishment.

In cases of suspicion or doubtful guilt, singularly enough, the Shoans follow certain instructions which they say are contained in the epistles of St. Paul, and point more particularly to that passage in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, where it is said, "An oath for confirmation is the end of all strife." It is, therefore, customary for the accuser and the accused to present themselves at a church, where before a priest mutual oaths are required to be taken; the former swearing to the loss of his property, the latter that the crime laid to his charge is unfounded, and there, unless further evidence is obtained, the matter ends. Should the accused refuse to purge himself in this manner of the accusation, it is considered as a confession of guilt, and the priest then acts as mediator, and generally

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receiving a small fine for the use of the Church from the delinquent, he is made the agent to restore the stolen property to the rightful owner, and the affair is quietly hushed up amongst them.

Originally, I believe European lawyers were priests, and, perhaps, in this portion of the duties of the clergy in Abyssinia, we have at the present day, law practice as it existed amongst our ancestors in an early state of society. In making wills, it may be also observed, where a number of sons are left behind, the monks in Shoa are the only executors, three of them being closeted with the dying father, receive his commands, and after the celebration of the *tescar*, or funeral feast of the deceased, they then assemble the children, and divide what property is left, according to the verbal directions of the testator, and from their allotment there is no appeal, even if they should disinherit, with a single ahmulah, the son that has been supposed to have been the greatest favourite with the father.

Tinta had made the visit to-day, to ask me if I would accompany him in the evening to visit Abdoanarch, the new governor, who had expressed a wish that I should call upon him. I excused myself upon the plea of ill-health; for I did not choose that it should be supposed because I was not upon good terms with the Embassy, that I was anxious to be friendly with those who avowed open hostility to the English, and all white men. Tinta naturally disliked the new governor, so soon agreed

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with me that he was a cunning old fox, and that it was as well to have as little to do with him as possible, "for," said he, "he is older than you, and cleverer than I am, and he will make us, *missala oolet hiyahoitsh*, like two donkies, carry his grain to market. Abdoanarch, although crafty, was not clever, and his first act as governor rather startled Sahale Selassee, for he released all the market people from paying the usual toll, and he ought to have known that the monarch did not bestow Aliu Amba upon him, for the purpose of purchasing popularity among some very restless subjects, the Mahomedans of Efat. No apparent disapprobation, however, was evinced at this, and the smiling Abdoanarch, proud in his place of honour by the side of the King, little suspected how admirably he was fooled to the top of his bent, like many others of far superior education were by the master mind that managed, like those of children, the shallow intellects that were politically opposed to him.

The only foreigner in Shoa, whilst I was there, able to compete with Sahale Selassee, was the Frenchman, M. Rochet d'Hericourt; him the King liked, and yet feared, but I am afraid he will now have secured to himself a place high in the royal confidence, whilst his daring schemes, suited exactly to the genius of Sahale Selassee, will lead, I am convinced, to an unlooked for revolution in the political relations of the various petty kingdoms into which Abyssinia is at present divided. Our

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Government has no idea of the ability which is now directing French intrigues in one of the richest countries upon the face of the earth, and which can yield within its own limits every valuable product of the temperate and torrid zone; in that country, to the northern limits of which the gold searching expeditions of Mahomed Allee, successful beyond all European knowledge, have and are continuing daily to add to his treasury, whilst to the south, the spices and rich wares of the market of Zanzibar are now competing with the similar productions of our East Indian possessions. Our Government will see, too late, the Phœnician empire again established in the north of Africa, supplied by its own inland provinces, with all those luxuries, for which, at present, Europe is dependent upon our possessions in Asia. At the same time, the Americans are successfully nursing on the Eastern coast a rival market, where their vessels can be supplied almost upon their own terms, with those products which, until the last twenty years, were only to be obtained in English or Dutch settlements in the East Indies. The policy of the talented Zaid Zaid, Imaum of Muscat and of Zanzibar, towards us is apparently the most friendly; but it is notorious, that in every indirect manner he can, he favours more highly the interests of the United States.

Walderheros returning from market, brought a large bag of cotton, around which the girls all

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thronged to pass judgment upon his purchase. Tufts of the down-embedded seed were taken out, and pulled to pieces, handsful were extended in the light, and after a deal of examination it was decided "that he might have made a better bargain, had he taken more trouble about it." The cotton was good, but slightly discoloured, which was attributed to the late rainy weather, as they asserted its yellowish tint was produced by moisture, and that it had been allowed to remain too long upon the tree. Specimens of two very different kinds of cotton were taken out and shown to me, one very frizzly, with short fibre, was called *Efatee tut*, Efat cotton; the other, with a longer fibre, and more like unspun silk, was called *Gondaree tut*, Gondar cotton, and is by far the most superior, and none known to America or Europe equals it in excellence.

Cotton is brought to Aliu Amba, chiefly from the country around Farree, and appears to flourish best at an elevation of between three or four thousand feet above the level of the sea. This is in latitude 10° north. Some small plantations may be found, even so high up the scarp of the Abyssinian table-land as six thousand feet, but these are not productive, and yield very indifferent cotton. The young plants require to be from three to four years old, before they bear available crops of pods. During this time, the cotton nurseries are cultivated with jowarhee, though I should think

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not upon any sound principle of husbandry, for the ripening of the tall grain must interfere with the full development of the lowly shrub, which is seldom more than three or four feet high. A cotton plantation reminded me very much of the appearance of the vineyard in the south of Europe, although the little snowball-like tufts of the burst pods, sprinkle the dark green foliage with numerous white spots.

My last ahmulahs having been expended, I had to send Walderheros to market again with a dollar, whilst I directed my attention, as all other visitors had departed, to the party now busily employed cleaning cotton, for as soon as the supply was brought from the market, Wallata Gabriel and her sisters, had set about preparing it for spinning. Flat stones, something larger than bricks, with a smooth upper surface, were placed upon the ground, my three factory girls kneeling down before them, each with an iron rod in her hands, about twelve inches long, and three quarters of an inch thick in the middle, and tapering to the extremities. This instrument is called a *medamager;* and with it a small quantity of seeded tufts of cotton, being laid upon the near end of the stone, is rolled out; the seeds, by the pressure being forced before the medamager, until they fall over the farther extremity of the stone. By this simple, but very effectual process a large portion of the cotton was soon in a state fit to be farther cleaned from dust

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and other extraneous matter, and which is the next part of the process it has to be submitted to before it is in a fit condition to be spun into thread.

The instrument employed for this purpose is called *duggar*, and is a large bow, the extremities of which are connected by a strong line of catgut. The cotton to be operated upon is placed in a clean soft hide spread upon the floor, whilst a woman, kneeling, holds the bow in the left hand over the cotton, so that the string is just high enough to catch the topmost fibres, whilst with the other hand, in which she holds the smooth curved neck of a gourd-shell, she continually keeps twanging away, each vibration of the string scattering and throwing up quantities of the lighter filaments, whilst all heavier matter sinks, as if in a fluid, to the bottom. The finer portions, upon the summit of the heap, as it appears satisfactory, is taken off, and placed carefully in a large covered basket made of mat, and a fresh supply of the unclean cotton is added to the heap in the ox skin, when the twanging process goes on again for a short time longer until another interval marks the removal of more of the approved material into the aforesaid covered receptacle. An instrument, exactly the same as the *duggar*, is used in England by hat-makers, to clean wool and fur for hats.

After the cotton has been cleansed in this manner, the ox skin is removed, and the dirt

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and dust resulting from the operation thrown away. The beautifully white dressed material is then taken out of the basket and piped, by portions being twined around the medamager, which being withdrawn, leaves a twisted lock. These, in numbers of six or seven, are folded together into a single knot, and laid by in a clean skin bag, until they are required for spinning into thread.

Long before Walderheros made his appearance on his return from the market, his voice was heard in the narrow lane that led from my house. He always made a practice of thus intimating his approach by conversing in a loud tone with any of the neighbours who might happen to be looking over the top of their inclosure, to examine the passers by in the hollow way beneath. Talking as he came along, he never concluded until after he had entered the wicket of my garden, and as he closed it behind him, a benediction, that might have been heard to the market-place, generally finished these conversations with his friends, just in time to begin another with me before he had entered the house.

As he now came in he took down from his shoulder the large goat skin bag, which formed the elegant purse for about ten pounds weight of salt, the small change for the dollar he had been nearly two hours employed in getting. One by one he arranged the ahmulahs in a long row, like a lot of thin narrow bricks, at my feet, that I might sufficiently admire their bulky character, and compliment him

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upon the excellent choice he had displayed in their selection.

His labours for the day closed with this, and the sun being nearly on the point of setting, the cotton spinners laid aside their reels. The father of Wallata Gabriel, Goodaloo, and Walder-Yoannes, all came in from the market together, and fast or no fast, young and old, on my proposal that they should taste some of my home brewed ale, a large gambo was broached, and soon disappeared, whilst they certainly did confine themselves to a meal of bread and cayenne *wort*, in which, as usual, a fowl had been boiled to rags, although Wallata Gabriel, out of a tender regard for the conscience of her religious old father, had fished up the bones with a spoon, that he might suppose its rich consistence depended only upon a thickening of meal.

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CHAPTER XXII.

Carpentering.—Fit up a study.—Worshippers of demons.—Saroitsh.—English superstition.—Priestly benediction.—Tabeeb monasteries.—Of their character and discipline.—Turning lathe.—Drinking hours.—Female ornaments.—Sumptuary edict.

August 13*th.*—Walderheros was occupied all day splitting and reducing to proper dimensions the ted tree that was brought yesterday, and of which I had determined to manufacture an English chair. Goodaloo was also busy, as he had undertaken to make me a table, and which he managed to do very well, after a long day's labour. It consisted merely of a round basket open at both extremities, made by turning thin stripes of bamboo alternately, before and behind strong upright pieces of the same plant. This was completed by a top being constructed of the like material, dexterously interwoven upon a ray-like skeleton, which was afterwards lashed tight down upon the basket pedestal with thongs of raw hide, and in this manner an excellent round table was made, three feet and a-half in circumference, and more than a yard high.

I managed to put up a parchment window during the day in the mud and stick wall, over

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where I intended the table should stand. Conveniently to hand, when seated upon my intended chair, I also placed against the wall, upon stick pegs thrust through, a shelf of seven or eight short jowharee stalks, so secured as to form a flat surface for a few books to stand upon.

It was two days before I could manage the chair, for I had neither hammer nor nails to work with, only a small saw and a *matrabier*, or axe of Abyssinia, and which is identically the same in form as those used by the Dankalli. With these, however, and a *medemager* heated red hot, with which I burnt the holes in the frame, after some little trouble, I built up by degrees a very respectable-looking piece of furniture. Walderheros admired it greatly, and soon interwove a very convenient seat, with thongs of hide and a rope made of a long kind of very tough grass, called *gwassia*, which grows in the *daggan*, or high country, and is largely used by the Abyssinians in making mats, fining sieves for flour, and baskets.

When my new chair was placed in its situation by the side of the table, a good light falling through the parchment window, which I took care to emblazon with sundry hieroglyphical and heraldic devices, and my little library itself laden with my books, I considered that I had a study complete. On the partition behind the chair, which separated my recess in the narrow corridor between the two walls of my circular house, from

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that occupied by the bedstead of Walderheros, I put up a large map of Africa, whilst in the prolonged sweep, on the other side of the table, was contained my own bed, and although the greatest width of the recess was scarcely five feet, altogether when the arrangements were complete, I considered my retreat to be very snug and comfortable. All the portion of the inner wall of the house, in front of my chair and table, was knocked down, and being exactly opposite to the door, which was again opposite to the little wicket of my garden enclosure, not only was light admitted freely into my study, but I always had a good view, from my chair, of what was going on in the interior of my house, and also of the neighbours who might be passing down the lane, and who generally, whether they saw me or not, bawled out the morning or evening salutation.

I was now gradually becoming accustomed to the circumstances of my situation, and began to take more interest in observing man as I found him in Shoa, but still I could not overcome my disease, although for the sake of information, I had called into my aid nearly all native means and medicines. To-day some pretenders to a mysterious kind of treatment were introduced by Walderheros, with a strong request that I should give them a trial, but on understanding that they were professors of the black art, and undertook to dislodge the *saroitsh*,

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or demons, that afflicted me, I dismissed them very summarily.

The popular belief in the existence of an inferior order of bad spirits, is universal in Abyssinia, and to their malign influence it is usual to ascribe every disease incidental to the human frame. Different opinions exist as to the number of these "*saroitsh*" (*sar*, in the singular). Some affirm there are only eight, others sixteen, and not a few say as many as eighty. Christians, Mahomedans, and Pagan Gallas, alike pay a kind of reverence to these evil spirits, by observing customs to avert the consequences of their anger, when supposed likely to be excited. In England we do exactly the same, when certain means are adopted to avert what we term "bad luck." I certainly believe myself that the same idea of minor devils afflicting man in some cases of ill health, was popular among our immediate ancestors, and the fantastical names that appear to have been bestowed upon them, assimilates still more closely this popular superstition of the Abyssinians of the present day, with that of the inhabitants of England about the time of Shakespear. Mad Tom, in "King Lear," affords some illustration of this, for we observe he says of himself, "The foul fiend haunts poor Tom. *Hop-dance* cries in Tom's belly for two white herrings." From forgetfulness I neglected to note down the names of the Abyssinian "saroitsh," for having one day inquired what they were,

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neither Walderheros nor his wife could recollect more than six, and they could not vouch for the correctness of these, so I was desired not to set them down, as I should have a better opportunity of acquiring them. After that it never occurred to me, until it was too late, that I had not again attended to the subject. One name, however, I recollect, was "*Burr alunga*," *silver whip*, and this is somewhat of the same whimsical character as the name of Hop-dance; and, in my opinion, future inquiries will show a near approach in the nomenclature of the two countries as regards this very similar superstition. It must be also observed that Mad Tom was afflicted with more than one, Fraterretto, Obidicut, Hobbididance, Mahu, Modo, and Flibbertigibbet, being the several fiends whom we are told tormented him.

August 14th.—Walderheros seeing that I defied the devil and all his works, by dismissing with a suitable admonition his lying agents, tried then, upon a different principle, to relieve me of the fever, and brought me down this morning two priests from the Church of Goodis Gorgis (St. George), which is situated on the ridge in front of Ankobar, before we come to the denuded site of the old Church of Abbo. These turbaned ministers of religion promised faithfully by prayers to cure me of my harassing complaint. I shook my head in a most scandalous manner, as I doubted the efficacy of their intercession quite as much as I did

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that of the devil worshippers, but gave them the salt notwithstanding, and after a long blessing, which I thought would never have ended, these two holy men took their leave.

When I was at Myolones, I heard that I was not far distant from a "goodam," or monastery of Tabeebs. This is the name of the artificers of Shoa, a blacksmith, a carpenter, a potter, a saddle-maker, each being called "Tabeeb." This has also become proverbial to particularize a clever man by an allusion to these cunning workmen, and I suspect that ere long the Shoans will have no other word for a sorcerer. I heard some remarkable tales respecting them: that they lived in common, men and women, but only met during the darkness of night, and the consequence was, that the greatest confusion of family and kindred ties resulted. In the day time the sexes lived, I was told, in separate houses. There was something very mysterious about them, so I determined as soon as the rains had subsided to visit one of their "goodams" and judge for myself. Among other things, it was said they were not Christians, and yet worshipped God and believed in Christ; that they had no "tabot," and that all the men and women were priests and priestesses. I could, in fact, make nothing of them; sometimes I thought they might be Jews, and then again that they were Freemasons, whose orgies had here assumed a religious character.

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I had an opportunity during to-day of making some inquiries; for one of the inmates of the Tabeeb convent, near Myolones, called to ask me for some medicine. He produced from beneath his tobe a drinking-horn, very neatly made, which he presented as his memolagee. After I had given him what he required I got Walderheros to ask him a few questions, and he seemed quite pleased that I took an interest in the religious opinions of the sect. He denied with a deal of indignation the common rumour of the men and women living promiscuously; on the contrary, he insisted that not only did a breach of chastity exclude the parties from the community, but no married people were allowed to live among them. It is only in the *Goodam*, or convent, this discipline is enforced, for a Tabeeb can marry and live like the other Shoans, but he then only visits the "Goodam," of his relations as a stranger until, tired of society, disabled or old, when he can again claim admission as a brother of their order. The Tabeebs are Christians, but do not pray to the Virgin Mary, and believe that Christ had no father, but still was a man like ourselves. They have no "tabot," or moveable altar (an ark), like the other Christians of Shoa, or as they would have, I suppose, if they were Jews. Every day in the week, except Saturday and Sunday, is a strict fast. They have no bed to sleep upon, as they sit up all night in their church, ranged along the wall, to which

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straps are secured, and within which the people sit at prayers, so that should any one go to sleep, he might not fall and hurt himself, or disturb the others. The *Goodam* is divided into two portions, one side being occupied with the women, the other by the men, and no unnecessary communication is permitted between the sexes. They eat and drink together once a-day in the evening, each having a fixed portion of food. The women grind flour, and work as do other Shoan females; the monks labour at the forge, or in the fields belonging to their convent. The Tabeeb women also make the earthenware vessels in the country, as all iron-work is done by the men. There are two superiors, an aged woman who has charge of the females, and an old man placed in authority over the males. The Negoos is a great friend to the Tabeebs, and gives to them several oxen during the year. Besides he has bestowed a great deal of land upon the various monasteries of these people, of which institutions there are no less than forty-two in Shoa. When the good man left me, I gave him a pair of scissors in return for his drinking horn, as I now made it a rule not to receive any memolagees. He was so delighted with my gift, that he pressed me very much to come and see him at his convent, as soon as ever I dared to move about, and promised me a very good reception.

The Abyssinians in making their drinking-horns, show considerable ingenuity, not so much in the

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complexity of their machinery, as in the great simplicity of the few aids they require to turn out a very neatly made article. A proper ox-horn being selected, it is cut into such lengths as are required. One of these is then gradually fixed upon a conical wooden mould; boiling water being employed to soften the horn, and make it more readily adapt itself to the shape, it is then laid aside for a few days, when the form becoming fixed, it is placed in the lathe to receive a series of circular cut rings, with which the outside is usually ornamented.

The lathe is nothing more than two short sticks placed in the ground, not more than three inches high above its surface. From the centre of each end of the mould an arm projects about six inches long, which is armed with a bit of iron. These iron points are received in the short stick supports, and the mould, with the horn upon it, then revolves freely. The workman sits upon the ground, and with his feet pressed hard against a stick, supports it in this manner against two stones, placed at a convenient distance in front of his work. This forms a rest for his cutting instrument, which he holds in his left hand, and presses against the horn, whilst with his right he wheels backwards and forwards the mould by a small catgut string bow, applied and used in the same manner as is the same tool by many artisans in England.

Not only are drinking-horns thus fashioned (and

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which, I must observe, are finished by a piece of round wood being fitted like a thin cork into the lower and smaller end), but also earrings are turned from the long black horn of the *sala*, a species of antelope, common in Adal and the low countries around Abyssinia. The solid extremities of the horns only are used, so that not more than two pair of earrings can be made from one horn, which is at least two feet long. The earrings are large and clumsy, but, considering the simple means employed in making them, are not despicable works of art. Each is turned in two pieces, not at all unlike in form and size high convex buttons, with small straight shafts projecting from the inside centres. These shafts are made so that one receives the other, and the earring thus formed looks like two small wheels connected by a short axle. To receive them into the ear a very large hole is required, and the axis of one of the halves being first introduced, the other is fixed upon it, and the lady then turns round, to ask how the new ornament looks.

Sometimes I have seen these horn earrings ornamented with an inlaid star of silver, and many an hour's labour have I had myself, letting in little brass studs from an old box-lid into the surface in the same manner, to please some of my female friends, who would come begging to have their earrings thus improved in appearance. Besides these ornaments turned from the sala horn, small

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black rings are cut, and I have also seen a neat little bottle, about two inches long, turned in a very ingenious manner, and which was intended to hold "col" (the black oxide of antimony), with which the Mahomedans adorn their eyelids, and the Christians employ as a medicine, applying it in the same manner. Besides horn earrings, the Abyssinian women wear large silver ones, sometimes weighing as much as two or three dollars each. One fashion alone is general in Shoa, a back and front portion, each of which invariably consists of three large beads, surmounted by a fourth. These are fixed in the ear in a similar manner as the horn ones, and look not unlike small bunches of grapes projecting before and behind.

Whilst I am upon this subject, I may observe that the Shoan women are excedingly fond of silver ornaments, and all their riches consist of such stores. Dollars are only valued as the means of thus enabling the possessors to adorn themselves or their women, for all the coin of this sort which enters Shoa ultimately finds its way into the crucible, except such as falls into the hands of the King, and which are destined for a less useful end, these being securely packed in jars, and deposited in caves. One hill, called Kundi, a few miles to the north of Ankobar, is pierced by numerous subterranean passages, in which are hidden in this manner immense treasures in gold and silver. They are kept closed by heavy doors of iron, and

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the whole hill, which is surmounted by a church, dedicated to the Virgin, is under the care of a vast number of priests. I think it not improbable that some excavated chambers that have been found in Egypt, and in rocks near Jerusalem, and considered to have been intended for tombs, were in fact the treasuries of the monarchs of these countries.

One ornament of silver, and which is worn by the women of Shoa upon the breast, hanging from the neck by a chain, also of silver, is in the form of a clasp, three or four inches long, and one inch broad; upon its front surface not unfrequently is rudely engraved some simple design in waving lines. Bracelets of silver are sometimes seen, and with the Mahomedan women, they are invariably of that metal; but the Christians generally wear plain ones, made of pewter, with anklets to correspond.

Besides the little unpretending martah of blue silk, the Christian women, if they can afford it, wear large necklaces of beads, and the British Political Mission have greatly increased the stock of these ornaments that is now brought into the market. Those I have seen were made generally by a succession of loops, consisting of seven or eight threads of different coloured seed beads, collected at certain lengths into one string, through a large angular-cut piece of amber. Eight or ten of these loops formed a long negligee, which, ornamented with a large tassel of small beads, was a present suited even for the acceptance of royalty. The Mahomedan women, on

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the contrary, wear one string of beads around their necks, formed of a hundred large and differently coloured beads, among which bright red ones seem to be preferred. These are divided into lengths by the interposition of pieces of amber, at least twice as long as those employed by the Christian women in collecting together into one, the various bead threads of their necklaces. The silver bracelets of the Islam are also different in form from those worn by the Christians, consisting of two or three thick silver wires, twisted upon each other, and finished at each extremity by a beaten square head. This is looped around the wrist, where it remains until required as security for loans, the most important use, I think, of silver articles in Shoa, amongst all religious denominations. No golden ornaments are ever observed among the Shoans, for a sumptuary edict of the Negoos forbids his subjects the use of this metal; the royal family of course being excepted.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

Wallata Gabriel dismissed.—Reinstated.—Comparison of different races of man.—Of human varieties.—Of the process of brewing.—Abyssinian ale.—Ingredients.—The horn of plenty.

August 14*th.*—Wallata Gabriel was a very good housekeeper, but unfortunately, like most other young women in Shoa, and, I believe, in all Abyssinia, she had a great many followers. Whenever Walderheros and I walked out, some one or other would always be manœuvring to get out of the house unobserved on our return; and although I was rather suspicious of some of her lovers making free with what little property I had, still I had as yet never missed anything. I had frequently reminded Walderheros of this weakness in his wife, but he always, in reply, appealed to me if she was not a good servant, although, he added, that it was for my convenience that he recognised her as his wife, and would previously have divorced her, only he thought that together they were so well adapted to manage my domestic affairs, that he could not do better than keep her. Coming in rather inopportunely this afternoon, after a long walk round the town, I could do nothing else but

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turn her away at once; whilst Walderheros expostulated with her paramour, among other severe things, asking him if he were not ashamed to intrude in such a manner when the *balla bait* (the master of the house) was not at home.

About an hour after I had dismissed Wallata Gabriel, an old lady, a relation of Walderheros, made her appearance, bringing some of the sweetly-scented herb called *Err-guftah*, as a memolagee. On requesting to know what she required, a long apologizing palliating intercession, of no ordinary character, was made for my delinquent housekeeper. She attributed my severity, she said, entirely to my not knowing Abyssinian customs, and turning to Walderheros, who sat on the raised rim of the hearth, stirring up the dry ashes with a stick, she upbraided him for not raising his voice in the behalf of his lawful wife. I was determined she should not return, and was dismissing the mediatrix with a positive refusal, when Walderheros looked at me with a most grievous expression of countenance, and lifted up the top of the straw bread-basket, to intimate, by its empty condition, how badly we should be off for dinner if I persisted in not recalling his wife. I could not help smiling, and the old lady, seeing me relent, put her head out of the door, and called out "Wallata Gabriel!" two or three times. The *fair penitent* very soon appeared, for she had been sitting in the lane all the time, and came tripping in,

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laughing and looking quite happy at being reinstated, and without the least trace of sorrow or contrition in her countenance.

This apparent lack of morality amongst the Shoans, like their Church history, is quite beyond my understanding. Yet even as respects this, a person educated in the more correct principles of what is considered to constitute social happiness, does not perceive in Shoa that violence done to propriety, which similar conduct in many of the southern states in Europe is apt to excite. The loose habits and indiscriminate intrigue, which displeased me when I witnessed it among the inhabitants of various countries situated upon the northern shores of the Mediterranean, only occasioned a smile when I observed it in Abyssinia. Among the former it was the pretension and affectation of virtue that made their sins stand in bolder comparison as vices, than a somewhat similar course of conduct among the simple, good-natured inhabitants of the latter country, who have no public opinion to propitiate, or, on the other hand, to control them, and whose naturally yielding disposition renders them too prone to indulgence; where also, let it be recollected, religion applies no curb, for the priests themselves in Shoa have had the decency to cease preaching that, which they never pretend to practise.

I was not many weeks upon the banks of the Ganges, and had not many opportunities of

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observing the native population of India, but the impression upon my mind of the moral character of the people generally of that country, apart from their particular worship, is, that the Indians, especially the women, possess in a great degree that moral principle, that delicacy of the mind, which is essentially the basis of that high sense of honour and personal respect, which constitute female chastity. I was enabled to draw, by my visit to India, a very interesting contrast between the women of that country and those of Shoa. Let me compare two extreme specimens, which will illustrate more broadly that which I wish to establish; that important differences in the constitution of the mind are the primary causes of those varieties in human nature; but which have been previously determined by differences in the features and form. This comparison will assist me, as truth, I think, is sometimes strikingly demonstrated by widely different contrasts; the paradox surprises and amuses the mind, and its effect in consequence is more permanent.

We will first, however, cursorily allude to the physical differences between the Indian girl and the Abyssinian, as a kind of introduction to their habits. The former is tall, thin, long-waisted, with an angular configuration of form, her features regular, sharply defined, bright and placid. She is a Circassian with a dark skin. Turn to the

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Abyssinian beauty, her eyes smile uncontrollably as you look. Her figure is short, plump, and roundly formed, with small, but full voluptuous features, that appear blended together with an infantile expression.

The minds of both are uneducated and natural: in this circumstance of their character, fortunately for the effect of the comparison, they may be supposed to be alike. But are their dispositions or conduct the same? How very different. The Indian girl has considerable personal vanity, is fond of ornaments and show, and seeks to attract attention by rich clothes, or studied graces. Even in their national attitudinizing, and the alluring nautch, repose and quiet seem to distinguish her from the laughing, romping, dress-neglecting Abyssinian, who, to attract notice, affects the child, and endeavours to please by artlessness and simplicity. As lovers, the Indian girl capriciously selects one lord, but the Abyssinian would consider this to be petty treason against nature, and a crying sin; she always loves the nearest, and whilst the eyes of that one are upon her, is reluctantly constant, but considers all engagements quite at end by absence, however short. Our coquettes, tall girls, with thin lips and cold sparkling eyes, always remind me of the Indian beauty, whilst our laughter-loving romps, even in their features and form, seem to belong to the Abyssinian mould, in some measure demonstrating

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the solution of the difficult problem, of accounting for the origin of those differences in the several varieties into which ethnologists have divided mankind. Among our own acquaintances, under external circumstances, exactly alike, nature produces by the mysterious agency of mental endowments, the possible mothers of families of man, which, under different circumstances of situation and of social education, would ultimately present two nations as distinct in every phenomenon of external appearance as are the most opposed specimens of the Circassian or the negro type.

The Shoans are certainly not a virtuous people, according to our ideas, and if we are to judge them by the standard of our moral code; but I positively deny that they are an immodest people, except among those where the dehumanizing influence of Mahomedanism, by degrading woman to the condition of a slave, has engendered the disgusting sensuality which characterizes the professors of that religion, and even these in Abyssinia are as superior as possible in this respect to the Mahomedans of Arabia and Persia. My opinion as to the modesty of the Shoan women may not perhaps be sufficiently understood, to be considered correct; but it was formed by observing the freedom from all restraint which they appear to enjoy in their country and among their families. This implies some confidence on the part of the men, and a woman must be modest to the extent that society requires,

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to command such a mark of deference and respect from the opposite sex.

I have seen sufficient, indeed, to convince me that the youth of Abyssinia, males and females, whilst influenced by the feelings natural to that age, are diffident, confiding, and good-natured, and however they may become altered by the experience of increasing years, and the education of after life, these moral principles still prevail, and give a favourable inclination to the practice of virtue and justice, that renders their social condition productive of much happiness to themselves, and affords some pleasure to the mind, that contemplates their character and condition, uninfluenced by the bias derived from the moral discipline of a very differently constituted community.

August 15*th*.—Being unable to go much abroad to extend my acquaintance with the habits and manners of the Shoans, I was particularly desirous that my establishment should be entirely conducted upon the principles of Abyssinian domestic economy. As this exactly suited the inclination of Walderheros, and as it did not matter to Goodaloo in what way things were managed, so that he got a large roll of teff bread in a morning to wrap up in his mekanet when he went to cut fuel, and his supper in the evening when he returned, the proposal met with universal approbation from the members of my household, and my wishes were attended to in every particular.

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Among other employments that occupied Walderheros and his wife two or three days every fortnight, was that of brewing, which was no trifling affair, as a fresh jar of ale, holding at least four gallons, was broached every day. The process is simple enough as performed in Shoa, and instead of being obliged to stand some time after it is made, five or six days is the time that is required to ripen and fine the beverage, which, if made well, is agreeable and very strong, with a slight acidity, that reminded me of the oldest ale I had ever drunk in England.

The ingredients are various, sometimes wheat or barley, or jowarhee grain, but in the kolla or low countries the latter is preferred, and as I also found some useful medical effects resulting from its use, my ale most frequently was made from this grain. The jowarhee is the durra of the Arabs, and is largely grown in India, where I think English residents might, by following the Abyssinian method, always have home-brewed ale in their houses.

When barley is employed for the purpose of brewing, it is first well dried in the sun, and afterwards broken in a mortar to divest it in some measure from the coarse outer skin, and which is separated by the usual process of fining through a grass made sieve. The prepared grain is then placed in a large earthenware saucer, at least two feet in diameter, and in the centre about six inches deep. This being raised upon three supports over

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a low fire, an attendant keeps stirring the contents, using for this purpose the small reaping hook of the country, the convex curve of which scrapes the barley from the bottom of the saucer, and prevents its burning. Whilst this is going on, another servant washes the jars intended to receive the ale, and which, after being well rinsed out, are fumigated by a few leaves of the bitter *gaisho* plant, placed upon a little lighted charcoal, on a broken piece of earthenware, and is introduced beneath the mouth of the vessel, which is held over it to receive the ascending smoke.

Gaisho are the leaves of a species of *Rhamnus* indigenous to Shoa, for besides being regularly cultivated in favourable situations between six to eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, I have also found it growing wild at the base of the hill of Kundi, above the Tabeeb monastery, in that neighbourhood. These leaves are serrated, and of the form and size of bay leaves, only of a lighter green. When used, after being dried in the sun, they are pulverized in a mortar until a very fine powder of an intensely but not permanent bitter is produced. It is then ready for the purposes required, which are similar to those of hops and gentian in brewing our beer.

After the barley has been well roasted, it is taken out of the pan and ground into a coarse meal, which, after being slightly wetted with water, is again exposed to the action of heat in the same

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manner as before, until it has become thoroughly scorched; being kept the whole time well stirred to prevent its burning. During this process, a small jar containing a thin acid mixture of flour and water, called *wahaka*, or leaven, to which the powdered *gaisho* has been previously added, has been standing to infuse in the warm wood ashes. The meal being now removed from the fire, is put into another jar, and sufficient water being added to make it into a paste, the *wahaka* is also added, and the mixture remains for the rest of the day. On the morrow, the whole contents of the lesser jar are transferred into one much larger, capable of holding at least thirty gallons of water, and which is now brought and poured by successive jarsfull into it until full. This is allowed to stand another day, when the surface, showing evidences of a certain point in the process of fermentation having been attained, the whole is then decanted, and strained through a large straw funnel into a number of lesser jars, each of which contains from four to five gallons. These are carefully stoppered by large cakes of a dirty mixture of the refuse of the strainings of the large jar and of clay, and which are plastered over the mouths of the jars. In about three days the ale is ready for use, and if made properly, is most excellent; bright, sparkling, and potent, it reminded me, by a slight acidity, of the best October of England. After nine or ten days, Abyssinian ale gets too sour to be a pleasant

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draught, which I attribute to the imperfect covering afforded by the clay plasters which close the jars in which it is contained.

When jowarhee, or durra is used, the grain, after being reduced to a fine meal, is made into a paste, or rather thin batter, with the *wahaka*. After standing one day and night, it is then made into thin cakes, as in the usual manner of baking teff bread. These cakes are afterwards broken up and placed in the large jar, the gaisho and water being added exactly as in the process where barley is employed, and when fermentation has somewhat progressed, the wort is in the same manner strained and decanted into lesser jars.

There is a red variety of jowarhee, or millet, called *tallange* largely cultivated in Shoa for brewing the tallah alone, as it is considered to produce the best description of the beverage. It is said to be injurious to man eaten in the form of *nuffrau*, or bread, although the grain is given to cattle for food. This certainly makes very fine ale, and should the experiment of making jowarhee beer succeed in the East, where I hope it will be tried, it will be very easy to procure some *tallange* for seed from Abyssinia, should the plant not exist, as I do not expect it does at present, in India.

In conjunction with all these different grains, and with a mixture of all, which is sometimes employed in the same brewing, it is not unusual to add a little real malt called *bikkalo*, generally in the propor-

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tion of double the quantity of gaisho. To make the bikkalo, a quantity of barley is placed in a flat dish and well wetted with water, a large stone being placed upon it. This presses the sprouting grain into one mass of a wheel-like form, which, when the operation has proceeded as far as is desired, is taken from the dish, a hole made through the centre, and it is strung upon a rope, where it hangs to dry against the wall, and is a common ornament of the interior of the houses in Shoa. On occasions of brewing, the quantity required is broken off, and its value as an ingredient is well-known, for a common Shoan proverb says, "the more bikkalo the better ale."

The proportions of the different ingredients are generally from forty to fifty pounds of grain, to which is added one pound of *gaisho*, and two pounds of *bikkalo*. From these quantities are made about thirty gallons of very good beer, but which, as I have observed before, will not keep more than ten or twelve days, which is one reason why ale is brewed generally in such small quantities.

There is no beverage so largely indulged in by the Shoans, whether Christian or Islam, as tallah. The Hurrahgee people are also extremely addicted to drinking it, and when they arrive in the country, every saltpiece that they can get is sure to be spent in ale. It is, therefore, an essential on all occasions of rejoicings, whether of a religious

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character, or at weddings, and even at *funerals*. In fact, the number and size of the jars of ale provided for the company indicates the importance of the feast, or the wealth of the entertainer, whilst no one to whom the cornucopœia of ancient mythology is familiar, but detects at once, the origin of that poetical appendage to divinity, as he contemplates the parties engaged in celebrating these jovial meetings. Every one bearing in his hand, a deep drinking-horn, varying in length, from a long span to more than half a cubit, which, as he drains its contents, is handed to the servants in charge of the jars of tallah, who quickly replenish it, and return it to the thirsty soul. Each reveller keeps to his own rude flagon, and nothing could more strikingly typify agricultural wealth and rustic happiness, than the representation of one of these drinking horns; and which, ornamented and embellished by Grecian and Latin poets, still I believe to have been the original of the famous horn of plenty; probably derived from some Egyptian hieroglyphic, which well expressed the condition of man it appears so naturally to characterize.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

Visited by Ibrahim.—Map of the Hawash.—Its effect upon table-land of Abyssinia.—Future juncture with the Abi.—Its early tributaries.—Effects of denudation.—Zui lake.—Popular tradition.—Abyssinian geographical work.—Galla tribes.

August 16*th*.—Ibrahim, the retired slave-merchant, who had not called since I had made the improvements in my house, came in to-day. He was rather astonished at the transformation I had effected, gave the table a good shake, sat down in my chair, and *tabored* with his fingers against the parchment window. "*Ahkeem e moot*," said he at last, "may the doctor die! if it is not good; you are a *tabeeb*, and the house of your Queen is not furnished so well." The old gentleman had brought his work with him, a piece of blue sood, which he was embroidering with green and red silk in a large cross-bar pattern, and which he told me was intended for a holiday guftah for his wife. Here I must observe, that although the Islam women in Shoa usually wear clothes of some common material dyed red, upon festival days they display very rich head-dresses of foreign silk, or embroidered cotton cloth, such as Ibrahim was now working.

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Walderheros placed the low Abyssinian chair for his accommodation, and then, as was generally the case when Ibrahim came to see me, a long conversation commenced respecting the town of Hurrah, of which he was a native, although he had not been to that city for the last eight or nine years. As usual, we had a map sketched upon the floor before us, which, however, on this occasion was not a very complicated one, merely the southern portion of the Hawash, where it encircles Shoa, and which formed the conclusion of the course of that river, the northern portion of which, as far as the ford of Mulkakuyu, I had already received information of from my Dankalli friends, Ohmed Medina and Ohmedu.

The principal features of the geography of the country included in the sketch map, were the three principal streams entering the Hawash from the scarp of the Abyssinian table-land, all of which flowed nearly to the south; but the most remarkable and interesting one was the great indentation in the outline of the high country, which in this situation seemed to be approaching to a separation into two parts by the denudation of the sources of the Hawash on the east, and a corresponding degradation on the west, occasioned by the action of the waters of the Assabi, or Abiah, the red Nile falling from the elevated plains of its earlier tributaries to join the Bahr ul Abiad at Kartoom, where its height above the level of the sea does not, I believe, exceed three thousand feet.

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Surrounding the head of the Hawash, separated only by the narrow valleys of denudation around its sources, are three elevated countries, all forming part of the table-land of Abyssinia, and between which, in the course of ages, this river has intruded itself by slow degrees, and is still progressing annually farther to the west. These three countries are Zingero to the south, Enarea to the west, and Shoa to the north, whilst the corresponding portions of the scarp are Gurague, Maitcha, and the ancient province of Fatagar, the more westerly portion of which is now possessed by the Soddo Gallas.

This now excavated portion of Abyssinia must have been at a former period one continuous table land, and the countries of Zingero and of Shoa then could only have been separated by streams that flowed to the north into the Abi, or to the south into the Gibbee, the ancient Assabi. The same convulsion which has determined the peculiar course of the Abi, or Bruce's Nile, seems to have influenced the direction of the encroachment of the Hawash into the limits of the plateau of Abyssinia; and also the position of the debouchè of the Red Nile from its summit to the plains below. An examination of the map will show a curious correspondence between the situation of the sources of the Hawash, of the southern curve of the Abi, and of the break in the table land where that river joins the Red Nile near Fazuglo. A great geological fault seems to extend

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across Abyssinia in the direction of these several points, one effect of which (that of the great disintegration of the material of the rocks along its course) appears to me to have favoured the denudation observed on the eastern and western borders of this country. To this fracture I also attribute the sudden curve of the Abi to the west, after flowing nearly due south from lake Dembea; the physical barrier to its farther continuance in that direction not being a ridge of hills, or what is generally termed an anticlinal axis, but the presence of the opposite wall of the disjointed rock, which characterizes the extension of the fault across the table land. This is neither unfounded assertion nor rash conclusion, but the deliberate opinion I have formed by a careful examination of the mighty operations of nature that appear to have acted upon the surface geography of Abyssinia from the most remote ages.

Let my reader return with me for a moment to the country of Adal, an extensive plain, scarcely one thousand feet high above the level of the sea. Its river, the Hawash, peculiarly its own, distinct in the non-existence of opposite corresponding watersheds to identify it as having formed part of the original surface level of the surrounding countries: an intruder, in fact, between the opposite slopes of the river Tacazza to the north and of the river Whaabbee to the south; the countries of which were once continuous, but some convulsion

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connected probably with that which has occasioned the fault across the table land of Abyssinia, has in this position, severed the country completely; and in the gaping chasm, filled up to a certain level with the debris, has formed the bed of the Hawash, which gradually progressing on every side, its wide circumference of sources encroaches every year upon the elevated lands which surround it.

A traveller in Adal cannot help noticing the singular character of the situation of the river Hawash, for he crosses over its bounding ridge to the east, and has partial opportunities of observing the bluff scarp-like terminations of the Angotcha, the Abyssinian, and the Hurrahgee table lands, all of which are being rapidly denuded by the numerous little tributaries which flow to swell the Hawash. But this extending operation is most strikingly illustrated in a line with the fault which has extended from the sea-coast to Fazuglo, in the west of Abyssinia. Here, to the south of Shoa, the Hawash has already approached within one day's journey from the deep valley of the Abi, and removes annually great portions of the surrounding table land, which had previously determined the rain drops to flow into that river, but subsequent to which removal, all falling water must for the future, aid in swelling the insidious river of the low-land of Adal. The valleys of numerous small streams, the sides of which, denuded

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to the required depth, have been thus gradually opened into, and as this is naturally aided by the steep fall of the scarp, denudation goes on rapidly when the first inclination towards the Hawash has been given to the stream, that had previously meandered upon a nearly level plain. In this manner I contend, that the valley of the Airahra, between the narrow ridges of Ankobar, and the edge of the table-land at Tchakkah, has been acted upon, and that the waters falling to the west of Ankobar, and which now flow into the Hawash, were formerly conducted to the Jumma, and so to the Abi, when the two elevated points mentioned were continuous, as they most certainly have been.

The geology of Abyssinia also favours these strange alterations of its own face; for it is composed almost entirely of volcanic rocks, easily decomposable, the operation, in fact, scarcely requires the aid of water to occasion it; for the atmosphere alone crumbles the hardest rocks, in the course of one year, into a stratum of loose earth; and water appears to be merely the carrying agent, to remove the soft soil, and expose a fresh surface to the action of the air. It is this which adds so considerably to the fertility of the Argobbah counties, situated on the scarp of the Abyssinian table-land; for every fresh year, virgin earth of the most fertile capability, is offered spontaneously, for the benefit of the cultivator, to whom, in this situation, the use of manure is unknown.

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Rain, however, aids considerably in removing vast portions of the table-land; for during the wet season, generally some few days after the commencement of the rains, and again, near its close, severe thunder storms, with slight earthquakes, occur; and the devastation which results, is not so much to be attributed to the latter, as it is to the previously fallen rain; which, having penetrated to a certain depth of the easily disintegrated rock, the least agitation brings down immense quantities, from the nearly perpendicular cliffs. An earthquake scarcely perceptible, and which, perhaps, is only consequent upon meteoric explosion, by the reverberating vibrations being communicated to the loose, yet prominent surfaces of the hilly scarp; there always precipitates ruinous masses of earth and rock, whilst not a trace of its effects can be perceived upon the table-land. This is the real character of all earthquakes in Abyssinia I have witnessed; and although the death of twelve or fifteen people, have been consequent, it has only been in different situations of peril, the proper precaution could have easily obviated, as it was where denudation had been long undermining the foundation of their houses, or of those on the terraces above; and which, when a moment of extraordinary atmospheric commotion occurred, were shaken from the sides of the valleys into the stream below. No leaping of the earth, or those violent commotions, which mark these convulsions in other countries,

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occur in Shoa. In Ankobar, during the severest landslips, for they are nothing else, a loose stone building thirty or forty feet high, and a still more rickety arch built by Demetrius, although in exposed situations, were not affected in the least.

The tremour of the earth consequent upon portions of its surface being detached, was only felt upon the situation on which it occurred; and were it not for the heavy fall of rocks from the overhanging table-land, no evidences of a violent convulsion could be ever observed; so that I am justified, in attributing to external influences, rather than to internal operations, the occasional agitations of the earth which are experienced in Abyssinia during the wet season.

The combined effects, however, of all these disintegrating agents of the table land of Abyssinia, is to increase farther westward the course of the Hawash, and we find that in the situation most favourable for the operation of denudation there is contained, its most distant sources. Already, by the testimony of M. Rochet d'Hericourt and Dr. Krapf, the head of the Hawash reaches within thirty miles of the Abi, the Nile of Bruce, and that in that direction it will still progress, may be safely assumed, whilst the present order of things established by nature is continued; and in the course of time a communication will most certainly be opened between this river and that of Northern Abyssinia, when probably, by this addition to its volume

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of water, and a continual denudation going on also towards the east, diminishing daily the barrier between it and the sea; the Hawash will then enter the sea, and open a fresh highway into the interior of Africa. Geologists may observe in this mighty operation, something analogous to that to which they attribute other natural phenomena with which they may be familiar, and the facts that I have stated, singular as they may appear, are as easily demonstrated to be true as is the westward progress of the falls of Niagara towards the lakes of Northern America.

Within the indentation in the table land to the south of Shoa, Ibrahim placed three principal streams, all of which appear to flow south from the scarp in that situation. These were, one stream which separated the Maitcha Gallas from the Soddo Gallas; the second, called Hashei, which separated the latter from the Abitshoo; and the third was the Kassam, which flowed through the province of Bulga. On inquiring the situation of the Zui lake, which, from previous information, I knew was not far from the Hawash in this situation, Ibrahim explained to me that it received the waters that flowed from the opposite scarp to that of Shoa, and which constituted, with the high land to the north of the Gibbee in this situation, the country of Guragué. On the other side of the stream of the Gibbee was Zingero. Zui, called also Lakee, has several small islands situated in its waters, each of which is inhabited by monks, but on the

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largest a very celebrated monastery exists, in which, according to vulgar ideas, all the wealth and books relative to the ancient empire of Abyssinia have been concealed since the celebrated Mahomedan invasion of that country in the sixteenth century, by Mahomed Grahnè. There may be some truth respecting the manuscripts that are contained in the monastery of Lake Zui, but I question much if any treasure is to be found there, for in that case Sahale Selassee would, before this, have attempted to subdue the Galla tribes intervening, which could be accomplished in one campaign, for already, in that direction, the country as far as the Hawash has submitted to him, and Zui is not more than two days' journey to the south. That its conquest is intended by the Negoos of Shoa, I have no doubt, and I think he only postpones it until he can effect the reduction of the whole of Guragué, at the same time the inhabitants of which are very much affected towards him, and in fact consider him to be their monarch. I have witnessed two or three interesting interviews between parties coming with unsolicited tribute from Guragué; and when the monarch endeavoured to induce me to remain with him, he held out the opportunity I should have of visiting that country in the course of the next two years, by accompanying him, and which he supposed would be a temptation for me to stay.

The Negoos himself corroborated the statement of Ibrahim, who had visited the shores of this lake

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several times, that there was no outlet for its waters, but that it was entirely distinct from the river Hawash. Karissa, a Galla, from Cambat, who when enslaved was first taken to Gurague, and lived near Zui several years, also told me that a number of small streams fell into the lake from all sides, and that there was a tradition that a long time ago, the length of which he had no idea of, all the country now occupied by the lake which is about fifteen miles in diameter, was possessed by seven chiefs, whose lands, for their sins, of course, or it would not be an Abyssinian legend, were swallowed up in one night, with loud subterranean noises, and stars shooting out of the earth, and that the next day nothing could be seen but the present lakes, and the islands it contains. Considering the character of the country, and the phenomena still witnessed in Adal, whilst the country around Zui appears to be situated upon the same elevation above the sea; I have no doubt that this tradition is partly founded upon fact, and contains the national remembrance of an extensive and appalling incident connected with some volcanic convulsion, that at a former period occurred in this situation.

My morning's lesson in geography terminated with a promise that Ibrahim should get me the title of a Geez book upon the subject, which he asserted he had seen in Hurrah, for I must observe he ridiculed the idea of anything having been preserved during the invasion of Grahnè into Abyssinia, by

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being taken to the monastery of Zui. He stated that in the city of Hurrah, which was then the capital of the kingdom of Adal, there was at the present day an entire library which had formed part of the spoil of the conqueror on that occasion, and that in the same building with the books is preserved the original silver kettle drums that were formerly carried before the Emperor. He had also seen a map which had been made by the orders of Mahomed Grahnè, of the countries he had subdued from Massoah and Gondah in the north, to Magadish in the south, and upon which was particularly marked the site of every Christian temple he had destroyed. A copy of this map could, I think, be easily obtained by means of our Berberah acquaintance, Shurmalkee, whose connexion with the city of Hurrah is much more considerable than it is supposed to be by our Government.

Upon both banks of that part of the Hawash which partially encircles Shoa, numerous tribes of Galla find sustenance for immense herds of cattle. Among these, the most important are the Maitcha and Soddo tribes, situated upon the earliest of its most western tributaries; next to these, proceeding from the west, is the Tchukalla; then Lakee, or those living between lake Zui and the Hawash; to these succeed the Gilla, the Roga, and then the Gallahn, the chief of which, Shumbo, is a son-in-law of the Negoos, baptized and married the same day, whilst I was in Shoa. Through his district lies the safest

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road to Gurague, and accordingly it is the one principally taken by slave merchants, who, however, seldom return that way, preferring a more circuitous one, around the sources of the Hawash, among the tribes situated upon the table land of Abyssinia. Adjoining to the Gallahn Galla are the Aroosee, a powerful and warlike nation of the same people, but who appear to be considerably in advance of their barbarous brethren. The Aroosee are large agriculturists, and great quantities of coffee, and of a red dye, called *wurrsee*, which is exported from Berberah to India and Arabia, is produced in their country. They occupy all the district between Hawash and the north-western streams of the Whaabbee. Where they terminate on the east, the possessions of the Hittoo Galla commence, who also "drink of the waters of the Hawash," and are, it will be recollected the tribe, some of whom attacked the Kafilah of the Hy Soumaulee, at Dophan, on the occasion of my coming up to Shoa. On a map of a limited size, it would be impossible to introduce the names of the numerous tribes of these people that border upon Shoa to the south, nor would any benefit arise from the list beyond that which may be obtained by the general designation, "Galla tribes," and which I have, therefore, employed to mark the localities of these people.

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CHAPTER XXV.

No prospect of recovery.—Slaughter of the goat.—Manufacture of skin-bags.—The process.—Farming.—The bark employed.—Morocco leather.—Carcase butchers.—Process of cutting up meat.

August 21st.—The termination of the fast of Felsat was hailed with considerable pleasure by the very best of Christians in Shoa, and this happened on the last day of the interval which dates this chapter, for increasing want of space compels me to relinquish the usual diurnal account. As it happened, nothing of importance occurred, except only that I began to find myself gradually getting weaker and weaker, and the symptoms of my illness increasing in violence upon every fresh attack. I attributed this, in a great measure, to the wet season, which was now most decidedly set in, and for the last three or four days especially it had rained without intermission. It was a cheerless time, the moist foggy state of the atmosphere, and the muddy condition of the road, quite prevented me from taking my usual walks, and looking at the dripping state of my thatched roof, or listening to the pattering of the large rain drops against my parchment window, was all the amusement I had

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after I had determined to confine myself more to bed, either to recruit myself after the severe fever paroxysms, or with the hope of averting in some measure the force of their attack by a little careful nursing. I ceased, too, to take any pleasure in the interesting conversations of Ibrahim, or Sheik Tigh, or, in fact, any one from whom previously I had ever been most inquiring respecting every subject of importance or novelty I could think of to ask about. My cup of coffee in the morning, or a drinking hornful of the warmed ale, was the only thing I dare indulge in, for solids of any kind had a great tendency to occasion congestion in the brain, and after eating anything a severe headache was the certain consequence. I took the hint, and gave up the honeyed repast at breakfast and the fricasee at night, and made a point of conciliating as much as possible that irritable viscus the stomach, that seemed after all to be at the bottom of the evil.

It was a horrible retribution, therefore, for Walderheros to contemplate, and which, no doubt, will have a beneficial effect upon his future conduct as regards the respect due to the institutions of the Church, when, on the morning after the end of the fast, which was to be a day of great rejoicing, I intimated my determination to eat no more flesh meat for at least a week. After all my jests about the folly of fasting, telling my people that during the continuance of such terms of abstinence, I was

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a good Mahomedan, and having by my example on more than one occasion, tempted him and the others of my household to indulge in food when they ought to have been observing a stricter discipline—after all this, on the day appointed for rejoicing, to see all appetite taken from me was so evidently a judgment from heaven, that I was strongly recommended to propitiate the Virgin Mary immediately by bestowing the goat, which the Negoos had sent to me at Myolones, upon a church dedicated to the Mother of Christ. So disinterested in fact, was Walderheros, that he went off to procure one of the priests upon the establishment, and who, when he arrived, had I carried out my servant's intentions, would have walked away with the goat immediately, such was his anxiety for my restoration to the favour of heaven.

I could not be very well angry with Walderheros, and I was too ill either to laugh at, or to endeavour to convert the priest, so I dismissed him with an ahmulah, for his willingness to relieve me of the supposed ban under which I was laid. When he was gone, however, the weather having cleared up a little, I directed my servants to kill the goat, and to ask such of their Christian friends who lived in Aliu Amba to come to the party on the occasion, as I wanted it eaten up, that no temptation should exist to divert me from my resolution not to take any animal food.

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The best butcher in the place, Tinta's misselannee, who had always shown himself ready to render assistance whenever I required some extra hand, could not, of course, be omitted. Gwalior, another servant of Tinta, and a patient of mine, was also called in at the death of the doomed goat, which gallantly showed fight, surrounded, as he was, by a host of hungry enemies, who, besides seeking the satisfaction of revenge for the indiscrimate tuppings and bumpings he had given and occasioned among the party, had had their interest excited by the portions of his venison mutton, that each, in the mind's eye, already saw hanging up in a mimosa tree that grew in my garden, and which formed the shambles generally on such occasions.

A lot of yelping boys came into the enclosure, and crowded about the butchers aiding the goat in his attempts to get away, by attempting to catch him, and of course running in the way of those who might have been able to do it. A number of women also thronged in as the stir became faster, and who stood around me as a kind of body-guard, for the leaping "diabolus" of a goat sometimes threatened even to make our heads a stepping-stone to fly over the high enclosure. A long lasso at length being thrown ignobly at his feet, the next move he made ensnared him by the leg, and the triumph of his life-hunters was complete. The rope being run around the trunk of the mimosa, the unwilling goat was

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dragged, like a victim of Spanish civil war, backwards to his doom, and a prayer of peace being muttered by the clerk, Walderheros, the high priest, the misselannee, cut the throat of their prey, the invocation of the Trinity, like the Islam "ul Allah," sanctifying the bloody business of depriving an animal of life.

It is singular to observe the pertinacity of custom, and how characteristic of descent particular habits and ceremonies become long after the separation of different nations from their original root. The Arabs, the Amhara, or the Abyssinians, and the Jews, all precede the slaughter of animals for food with some short prayer, which, differing in form, is still the same custom, and which, I think, originated at a period antecedent to their dispersion as different nations into the several countries they now occupy. It has also continued among them, even changed as these nations are in religion and social character, the Hebrew trader, the Arab nomade shepherd, and the Abyssinian agriculturist. Jew, Mahomedan, and Christian, still retain this evidence of a common origin, but which marks an ethnological era posterior, I believe, by many centuries to the more general custom of circumcision common to all these people, and to many other African nations.*

* A singular fact connected with this custom of making a short prayer, whilst slaughtering the victim, I gathered from a note in a recent edition of "Sale's Koran." It appears that by a decision of those learned in the law, which is laid down in that book, animals

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Such a goat as had just been killed, fed up to the high condition he was in, could not have been bought in the market for less than ten ahmulahs, two shillings and twopence. The skin alone, however, is supposed to be worth three ahmulahs; and great care is taken not to injure it with the point of the knife, when flaying the carcase. To be of any value, it must be taken off uncut, except around the neck, and in those situations necessary to enable the butchers to draw the legs out of the skin. Also, of course, where the first incision is made to commence the

killed by the Jews may be partaken of by Mahomedans. A representation to the Cadi of Cairo having been made, that nearly all the butchers of that city were followers of the law of Moses, they were about to be suspended from that employment, when their Chief Rabbi proved to the satisfaction of their Moslem judges, that the Koran bids Mahomedans not to refuse food which has been sanctified to the one true God, which was always done by those who professed the faith of Abraham and the law of Moses, when killing animals for food. This circumstance, and also the disrespect shown by the Whaabbees to the tomb of the Prophet, and the temple at Mecca, demonstrate to my satisfaction that education alone is required to show to the Mahomedans, the absurdity of the false hopes with which their Prophet has surrounded the worship of the only one God, and of the inapplicability of his laws to improve or humanize mankind. I could point out, if this were a proper place, proofs without end, of the liberality and extreme toleration of learned and enlightened Mahomedans, and we ought not to attribute the bigotry of ignorance, alike fierce and cruel in Christian, Mahomedan, and Jew, to their *religious belief*, which on examination will be found to have been originally very similar amongst all these denominations, and that the greatest differences appear to be in the several codes of social laws adopted by each.

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process, and which is a circular cut carried around both haunches, not many inches from and having the tail for a centre. The hide is then stripped over the thighs, and two smaller incisions being made around the middle joint of the hind legs, enable them to be drawn out. A stick is now placed to extend these extremities, and by this, for the convenience of the operators, the whole carcase is suspended from the branch of a tree, and by some easy pulls around the body, the skin is gradually withdrawn over the forelegs, which are incised around the knees to admit of their being taken out; after which, the head being removed, the whole business concludes by the skin being pulled inside out over the decollated neck. One of the parties now takes a rough stone and well rubs the inside surface, to divest it of a few fibres of the subcutaneous muscle which are inserted into the skin, and after this operation it is laid aside until the next day; the more interesting business of attending to the meat calling immediate attention.

These entire skins are afterwards made into sacks by the apertures around the neck and legs being secured by a double fold of the skin being sewed upon each other, by means of a slender but very tough thong. These small seams are rendered quite air-tight, and the larger orifice around the haunches being gathered together by the hands, the yet raw skin is distended with air, and the orifice being then tied up, the swollen bag is left in that

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state for a few days until slight putrefaction has commenced, when the application of the rough stone soon divests its surface of the hair. After this has been effected, a deal of labour, during at least one day, is required to soften the distended skin by beating it with heavy sticks, or trampling upon it for hours together, the labourer supporting himself by clinging to the bough of a tree over head, or holding on by the wall of the house. In this manner, whilst the skin is drying, it is prevented from getting stiff, and still further to secure it from this evil condition, it is frequently rubbed with small quantities of butter. When it is supposed that there is no chance of the skin becoming hard and easily broken, the orifice is opened, the air escapes, and a very soft flaccid leather bag is produced, but which, for several days after, affords an amusement to the owner, when otherwise unemployed, by well rubbing it all over with his hands.

Almost all the produce of the fields is conveyed to the market in such sacks as these—cotton, grain, and the Berberah pepper. It is even the only money-bag employed to carry home the salt returns for the different wares that have been sold. None other could have been employed by Joseph's brethren when they loaded their asses and went down into Egypt; for none are more naturally the resources of a shepherd people, or better adapted by their form and size for the little useful animal which seems to have been as universally employed by

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the Jews as by the Amhara of the present day. By a species of gratitude, sincere as it is deserved, *hiyah*, the word signifying *ass*, is used by the latter people as another designation for friend; and I well remember the mistake of a learner of that language who went into a great rage by being accosted "hiyah" by an Amhara friend.

The skins of sheep and of small goats are made into parchment by being more particularly divested of the fleshy fibres with the rough stone, and then, after the hairs have been removed by putrefaction, simply drying in the sun. For this purpose, it is stretched in a favourable situation, a few inches from the ground, by a number of small wooden pegs, which are inserted into small apertures made in the edge of the skin, and it is thus prevented from becoming corrugated during the process of drying.

In the same manner, the larger hides of cows and oxen are dried, most frequently before putrefaction has produced any effect upon the hairs, and which, of course, then remain. This is the general seat for visitors during the day, and their bed at night, unless a tanned hide (*nit*, as it is termed) can be procured, and which is considered softer and more suitable for a respected guest.

The *nit*, or leather, is tanned by being made into a kind of trough, which contains an infusion of the bark of the *kantuffa* acacia. This trough is formed by a skin being loosely extended upon four

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stick supports, which elevate it about a foot from the ground. The kantuffa bark, after being well pounded in a mortar, is strewed over the surface, and the hollow is then filled with cold water, and in the course of a few days a strong red infusion is made, with which the whole surface of the skin is frequently washed, and when evaporation has reduced its contents to a sloppy paste, the sticks are withdrawn, the ends folded in, and with the contained mass, the skin then undergoes the usual fatiguing process of treading, until the evidences of the nit being properly prepared are satisfactory.

The bark of the *kantuffa* reminded me of that of the red mimosa of Adal, which produced an astringent gum, something like *kino*, but not, I considered, so powerful a drug. This tree, however, was pointed out to me as being that with the bark of which the Dankalli tan their affaleetahs, or small water-skins, carried by travellers; for the larger ones are prepared with the hair left on, by simply drying in the hot sun, after having been distended with air, to expose them fully to its influence. It is very probable that the celebrated Morocco leather, derives its bright red colour from the bark employed in tanning being obtained either from the kantuffa or the Adal tree, for both these trees give a very red colour to the skins that are prepared with their bark. From this I am inclined to believe, that among other articles of commerce that might be advantageously drawn from the Barbar

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states in the north of Africa, a good tanning bark could be obtained in considerable quantities, and at a very reasonable rate.

Walderheros and the misselannee proceeded to carve the flayed carcase, not in any systematic manner, as I could observe, but directed chiefly in the size of the lumps of meat that were cut off by the character of the individual to whom they were severally assigned: thus, Tinta got a noble haunch forwarded to him, whilst, on the other hand, the *matrabier*, or axe, was called in to aid in dividing the other into three portions, for as many minor acquaintances of my servants. In the same manner, a certain number of ribs were counted for Gwalior, but the mother of Goodaloo got a great many more of the opposite side, and in this irregular manner, after a very busy scene of some two or three hours, except the portions which Walderheros had retained for himself, the whole of the goat had disappeared by degrees through the wicket of the inclosure, for the rain that was now commencing prevented the party from holding the festival in the garden, and I was a great deal too ill to have it celebrated within my own house.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

Invitation to visit the Negoos.—Karissa and his firelock.—Some account of the countries to the south of Shoa.—Distances.—A reputed cannibal people.—Other absurd rumours.—Probable truth.—Of the Doko: not dwarfs but monkeys.

August 24th.—Early this morning, Tinta appeared at my house. He had returned from Ankobar the night before, and had brought an invitation or command, that if I were able I should visit the Negoos at Debra Berhan, on the 24th of September, upon which day a great national festival is held in honour of the anniversary of the discovery of the Cross by the Empress Helena. This is called the *muscal* from a similar word signifying *cross*, and is a kind of military review, before the Negoos, of all his forces, every tenant and slave capable of bearing arms being expected to be present. It is, in fact, an Abyssinian wapentake, and its real origin, although at the present time concealed by the substitution of a religious name and purpose, may be still traced to the same social institutions that first established similar feudal parades among the older European nations. I shall dismiss the subject at present, however, with the single remark, that no Mahome-

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dan, except he wear the *matab* for the occasion of the muscal, or the expeditions against the Gallas, is expected to appear as a soldier before the Negoos; the Wallasmah Mahomed having all claim upon military service from those inhabitants of Shoa who profess that religion.

With Tinta came a gunman of the Negoos' body guard, named Karissa, with whom I was previously acquainted, and who, having injured the lock of his new musket, now came to solicit me to set it to rights, under the full impression that I had been brought up to the business. Finding on examination that a small fragment of the catch of the trigger was only broken off, which prevented it being held properly in the groove of the tumbling portion of the lock, I promised to do it for him, but as I had then no spring vice, or files, I told him he must stop until Tinta could procure them for me, which the latter promised to do in the course of the day.

Karissa was a very intelligent Galla, wore his hair in their usual wild manner, in a series of long plaited elf-locks, hanging on all sides of his head and dark brown face. His features were regular and well defined, which is not very usual among those considered to be true Galla, but as he came from Cambat to the south and east of Zingero, and as I have seen others from the same country who resembled Karissa very much, future discoveries have yet to determine to what is owing this differ-

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ence in the appearance of the countenance from those whom I term Soumaulee Gallas, or the mulatto progeny of Shankalli and Dankalli parents. At present it will serve our purpose to class them as a mixed race between the Amhara and the Shankalli, or what is more probable, between the Amhara and the Soumaulee Galla.

As he sat with me all day, and it happened to be my good day, in contradistinction to the alternate evil one on which I was afflicted with the ague fit, I asked him many questions respecting his country and his parents. As I began to feel more interested in the conversation, and found that my partial knowledge of Amharic prevented me from making my visitor quite understand some of my questions, I sent Walderheros for Ibrahim, who soon came, and very readily undertook to act as interpreter and illustrator of Karissa's information.

He first told me that he was not a born slave of the Negoos, but had recommended himself to the notice of the monarch, by the dexterous manner in which he had conveyed messages to the Kings of Enarea, and of his own country, Cambat. For the fidelity which had marked his return to servitude, and for his bravery during the rebellion of Matoko he had been rewarded by being made a *nuftania*, or gunman, and would, were he to marry, have a house bestowed upon him, with as much land as two oxen could plough in the year.

He had lived several years in Gurague, and had

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crossed the river Gibbee where it passes to the south of Enarea, and he stated positively that it flowed into the Abiah, and so far gratified Ibrahim, who had so described it to me in his geography of Southern Abyssinia. One circumstance favourable for my proper understanding of the true situation of the countries he described as having passed through in his several journeys was, that Karissa had crossed the Hawash at Mulkukuyu, so we had at once a standard of distance that both of us knew, and this aided me materially in correcting the situations of many places with the names and relative positions of which I was already familiar from my conversations with Ibrahim.

Respecting Ankor, Karissa stated it to be a part of Enarea, and not of Zingero. He did not know whether it had ever formed part of the latter country, which I had heard from another authority, a Christian duptera, who told me he had read it in a book belonging to the church of St. Michael, in Ankobar (where the Negoos deposits the greater part of his manuscript volumes), that Anquor, or Ankor, was a province of Zingero. Be that as it may, from Ankobar to Ankor is three times the distance between the former place to the ford over the Hawash, or about 150 miles. Zingero was about the same distance, directly to the south-west, whilst Ankor, or that part of Enarea which borders on the Gibbee, was nearly to the west-south-west. The sources of the Gibbee were not more than eighty

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miles from Angolahlah, and going on horseback, Karissa said that he could drink of the waters of that river before the evening of the second day. The Gallas of Limmoo he had heard of, but never visited, so that when I mentioned to him the name of Ouare, the Galla informant of M. Jomard, and also Kilho, who is represented as being chief of that country, he could give me no information respecting them. The river Abiah he knew was the same as the Gibbee, and said that it went through the Shankalli country to Sennaar.

Beyond the Abiah I was now told, a nation of white people like ourselves existed, but who were cannibals, and had all their utensils made of iron. That they boiled and eat all intruders into their country. He stated positively that he had himself seen a woman of this people, who had been brought to Enarea, and who had confirmed all the statements he was now making to me. As I believe myself that the Bahr ul Abiad will be found to have its earlier sources in an isolated table land like Abyssinia, but of much greater elevation, I began to suspect that these white people must be the inhabitants of the country surrounding the distant sources of this mysterious river, and that as the Assabi derived its name from flowing through a country of red people, that the White Nile, in like manner had been so designated from the circumstance of its table land being inhabited by a white race, and as a branch of that river

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is known by the name of Addo, which I consider to be the *Arian* term for *white*, this added some confirmation to my ideas. On inquiring, however, what knowledge Karissa had of the Bahr ul Abiad, I found that he was entirely ignorant of such a river, and when I modified the name, by calling it the river of the Tokruree, or blacks, he instantly conceived I was speaking of the Kalli, that is well known to flow to the south and east of Kuffah into the Indian Ocean, and by which caravans of slaves are constantly passing between Zingero and the coast of Zanzibar. There must, in fact, exist in this situation a most available road into the very centre of the continent of Africa, for I have subsequently seen Nubian slaves who had been in the service of Zaid Zaid, Imaum of Zanzibar, that corroborated this statement of Karissa in every particular respecting the transit of slaves across the table land of Abyssinia, from Sennaar to Lamoo on the Indian Ocean, and so to the market of Zanzibar.

I was, however, more interested in the account I received of the white people, and which was as exaggerated a relation, as many of the reports received by some travellers respecting the Doko dwarfs. To retail here all the absurd nonsense that Karissa entertained me with would be sadly misappropriating space, but I could gather from the reports that a singular race of men live in the most jealous seclusion, in a large desert-surrounded table land, similar in many respects to that of Abyssinia. That

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they were civilized was evident, from the fact of their writing being said to be quite different from the Geez, and it is not a nation just emerged from barbarism that would possess a knowledge of such an abstruse art as that of writing. As to the tale of their being cannibals, I recollected that even at the present day the very same report is entertained, and believed by the Negroes around Kordofan of European habits, and that we ourselves are supposed by them to be cannibals. This is, in fact, a charge so easily made, and serves so admirably to heighten the horrible, in a picture of a barbarous people drawn by an imaginative mind, that even among modern travellers we find an inclination to spread such rumours, without any examination as to their correctness, and sometimes, from a hasty conclusion, or an error in interpretation, without any foundation whatever. In this manner, a stigma of cannibalism has been attached to the Dankalli, but which only shows how careful travellers ought to be before they promulgate such strange and absurd stories.*

* One evening, on my return from Abyssinia, in company with the British Political Mission, a Galayla Muditu appeared in the camp. Around his head was placed the brindled shaggy tail of a hyena, which added not a little to the savage appearance of the man. He squatted on his heels in the customary manner, and most of the Europeans surrounded him, to look at the extreme of barbarism his figure and appearance presented. Several of our Kafilah men joined us, volunteering information; among other things, it was observed by a slave-dealer, that the man before us "was a bad man" (pointing at the same time to the Hyena's tail),

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Nothing can be positively asserted; but I believe, myself, that we are on the eve of a most interesting ethnological and geographical discovery, that will at once afford a solution to all the strange and improbable accounts which have reached us respecting the inhabitants of Central Africa. What we hear of dwarfs, cannibals, and communities of monkeys, may, perhaps, prove to be merely a muddied stream of information, conveyed to us through the medium of ignorant and barbarous tribes; but which may have a foundation of an unexpected character, in the existence of a nation in this situation; which, almost physically separated from the rest of the world by impassable deserts and unnavigable rivers, has continued in its original integrity that perfect condition of society which, once general, then almost extinguished, evidently preceded the barbarism from which the present

"that eats man," meaning of course, that the man being a Mahomedan, was very wicked for wearing any part of such a *corpse*-eating beast about his person. I met this very slave-merchant, who had thus expressed himself, some weeks afterwards, in the Red Sea, and as we were together on board the same vessel for several days, our conversation was frequently upon Abyssinian matters. I once recalled the scene of the so-called man-eater, and he was astonished, certainly, when I told him it was reported that the Dankalli were cannibals, and that the picture of this very Galayla Muditu was taken with that idea, as a portrait of a man-eater. Dankalli Mahomed, as he was then called, never came afterwards to sit with me and my friend, Padre Antonio Foggart, but he went through the process of sawing his throat, as if cutting it with a knife, to intimate how any cannibal would be punished if he appeared in their country.

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transition state has emerged, and which I believe to be gradually progressing to the re-attainment of the previous excellence of the primeval social institutions.

One strange report respecting the inhabitants of intra-tropical Africa, I think I shall be able to show the origin and foundation of, and which is the existence, in a situation to the south of Kuffah, of a nation of dwarfs, called Doko. From the information I have received myself, and from an examination of unpublished Portuguese documents relative to the geography of the eastern coast of Africa, and of the people inland; in the very situation presumed to be the native country of the Doko, I learn that a very different family of man is only to be found—the tall, muscular, and powerful Shankalli negro; and, more than this, the French traveller, M. d'Abbadie, from information received in Abyssinia, has reported that to the south of Enêrea and Kuffah, a nation of Shankalli reside, to whom the name Doko was given. It cannot, therefore, I think, be doubted that a people so designated do occupy the country to the south of Abyssinia, and that from among them are taken the greater number of slaves, that arrive at the markets of Enerea and Zingero, where the dealers dispose of them to the slave Kafilahs that are proceeding to Zanzibar, or to northern Abyssinia. Doko perhaps designates the slave country, or, perhaps, signifies as much as our *terra incognita*, for

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we find the same word entering into the name of the unknown countries situated to the south of Bornou and the Mandara range, and, therefore, the Dukalata of those portions on the west of Africa may correspond with the equally unknown country of the Doko upon the eastern side.

The accounts, however, lately received of the dwarfs of central Africa, is not new information, but is merely the revival of a very old idea, which in less enlightened times was naturally enough entertained by just and properly constituted minds, who acknowledged the greatness of the natural truths which had been demonstrated to them, by thus not refusing to believe that which with their limited knowledge, they could not consistently deny might be possible. It is this which characterizes the humility of genius, and which is rewarded by the light which must result from the inquiries excited by such expectations. But it becomes a proof of no little mental obtuseness, when the probability of any popular rumour is insisted upon, after the knowledge of facts has so far accumulated, as to enable us to demonstrate its absurdity. No reasonable being can positively deny the existence of a nation of very short statured men in Africa, but that he must believe because there may be such a people, that the animals described as the Doko dwarfs, are them, is quite out of the question. The real dwarfs may, ultimately, prove to be the Gonga people, and most probably

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they are. I have some singular evidence upon this very subject, which I only wish somewhat farther to confirm, to lay before the public; but shall at present confine myself to denying, that the Doko, of modern Abyssinian fable, represent the dwarfs alluded to by the naturalists of antiquity; or, that, in fact, they are men at all.

Ludolph and d'Lisle are, I believe, still the great authorities upon the geography of interior Africa; their maps were evidently constructed from well compared and long considered information; and conjectural geographers of the present day, are too glad, when their theories accord in any way with the delineation of these countries as represented by those authors. On examination of their maps it will be perceived, that both received such apparently well-authenticated accounts, of a nation of dwarfs dwelling to the South of Abyssinia, that they had been obliged to recognise their existence, and, of course, to find them a locality.

Ludolph, whose knowledge of the Geez and Amharic probably prevented him from considering the accounts of so great an importance as did the French geographer, only notices, by a small note appended to the name on the map, that the King of Zingero was stated to be a monkey. In the body of his work, however, he represents that he received considerable information respecting a nation of dwarfs living in this situation, and who accord in so many respects with the Doko of the

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present day, that there cannot be any reasonable doubt, but that both have resulted from similar popular rumours that have continued to us, from the time of Ludolph. A plate in his very interesting "History of Ethiopia," actually gives the presumed character of these so-called dwarfs, and who are represented in several situations characteristic of their habits, among which appears as most prominent that of being employed in devouring ants, which we are told also forms the principal food of the Doko. Ludolph, however, has so much respect for human nature as not to picture these dwarfs as men, but in every respect has delineated them as monkeys; and when it is understood that the word Zingero in Amharic signifies baboon, as well as the name of a large kingdom in the south of Shoa, the connexion of words and the confusion of ideas will be allowed to be quite natural, when we consider the ignorance of the Abyssinian informants, and the imperfect knowledge of their language, more especially of its synonymes, by even the most learned of the travellers from whom had been received any account of that country. It was this which misled Ludolph, although from the cautious note upon the map respecting the King of Zingero being stated to be a monkey, it appears that he had certain doubts, but his fidelity as a *closet* geographer and historian did not allow him to throw aside the information, merely because his own opinion did not accord with that which he was told to be the fact.

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M. d'Lisle seems to have been perfectly satisfied as to the human nature of the Government, and of course the people of Zingero, but still he was trammeled with a nation of so-called dwarfs, which in his days were represented to occupy a tract of country more remote than the Abyssinian kingdom of Zingero, so we find that in his map encircling that country to the west and south, a nation of dwarfs is placed, the name of whom, he was informed, was Makoko. Exactly as in the case of the *Zingero* of Ludolph, Makoko is nothing more but the Amharic term for monkey, and of course the same explanation proves the connexion of these Makoko dwarfs with those animals, and also of their identity with the same reported race of which Ludolph had previously recorded his knowledge, although, as I have before said, their existence as a nation was not so insisted upon by him as it appears to have been by d'Lisle.

I will now direct attention to the principal characteristics of the modern Doko, but I may observe, that no Abyssinian I ever questioned upon the subject, either learned duptera, or Kuffah slave, could give me any information, excepting an old servant of Dr. Krapf, Roophael, who seemed fully acquainted with them, and I have seen him amusing a whole circle of Shoans with his relation of these people. But be it observed that Ludolph's "History of Ethiopia" formed a part of his master's library, and he

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appeared perfectly familiar with the plate of the ant-eating monkeys, to which he always referred as his authority for his strange tale. The fullest account of these dwarfs is found in Major Harris's recent work, "The Highlands of Æthiopia," where we are told, "Both sexes go perfectly naked, and have thick pouting lips, diminutive eyes, and flat noses." "They are ignorant of the use of fire." "*Fruits* are their principal food, and to obtain these, women as well as men ascend the trees in numbers, and in their quarrels and scrambles not unfrequently throw each other from the branches." "They have no king, no laws, no arts, no arms, possess neither flocks nor herds, are not hunters, do not cultivate the soil, but subsist entirely upon fruits, roots, mice, *reptiles*, *ants*, and honey." These, such as they are described, cannot certainly be men possessing reasoning powers, and without that necessary characteristic of human nature, I cannot conceive how the idea could have been entertained for an instant, that the Doko belonged to our species, or that they could have been believed to be the dwarfs, supposed to exist in Africa by those ancient authors who have in their works treated upon the subject. Had it been shown that they possessed any attribute of humanity; a knowledge of God, for example, beyond a mere prostration with their feet against a tree, and a calling upon "*Yare! Yare!*" when in trouble or pain; or of social order beyond mere gregarious instinct; or of

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the simplest arts of life requiring the exercise of the least reasoning powers, then there might have been some reason to accord to the Doko the dignity of belonging to our species; but when we are fully acquainted with the character and manner of living of an animal that coincides exactly with the chief characteristics of the habits of the Doko, it would have been more philosophical to have classed them at once with monkeys. In that case, no reasonable objection could have been made to the supposition that they were a new and distinct variety of that animal, and which, perhaps, admitted of domestication to a much greater extent than any with which we are at present acquainted. It is probable, indeed, that this will be found to be the foundation of the whole story, for we are told that "their docility and usefulness, added to very limited wants, render them in high demand. None are ever sold out of the countries bordering the Gochob, and none, therefore, find their way to Shoa." This I consider to be another evidence of their being monkeys, for had they been real men and women, slave-dealers would most certainly have conveyed some of them either into northern Abyssinia or to Zanzibar. The plea of humanity, which has been stated to actuate these traffickers in human flesh not to separate the faithful and affectionate Doko from his master, I am glad to observe is too absurd not to be suppressed; but it is no reason why I should not mention this part of the statement as an

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additional evidence of the entirely ridiculous character of the information that has excited lately some little interest and attention among ethnologists in Europe, as to the probable existence of a new variety of the human species in intertropical Africa.

That the Doko may be monkeys admitting of considerable domestication I am the more inclined to believe, from the fact that the ancient Egyptians did call to their aid such a species of animal servants; and in many of the representations of the habits and arts of that interesting people will be found instances where monkeys are employed upon the duty they are so well adapted for—that of collecting fruits for their masters. At the present day we have no practice similar to this in the customs of any known people; but among other novelties to reward future enterprise, will be probably the identification of the Doko of Kuffah with the house-monkey of ancient Egypt, and their docility and usefulness, in that case, may then lead to their being introduced into other countries adapted to their constitutions, and where their services may be required. Such an animal, among a people subsisting upon fruits and vegetables, would be as valuable as the sheep-dog to a herdsman, or as the domesticated cormorant to the fish-eating inhabitants on some of the canals in China.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

Conversation with Karissa.—Of the origin of the Galla.—Of the word Adam.—Of Eve.—Phœnician history.—Sanchoniathon and Moses.—Of the religion of the Galla.—Of Waak.—Connexion with Bacchus.—Reward of enterprise.—African ethnology.—Of the armoury of the Negoos.—Different kinds of guns.—Of the ammunition.

Karissa remained the whole day at my house, for Tinta had been obliged to send to Ankobar for a spring vice. A discharged servant of the Embassy, named Sultaun, who resided in Aliu Amba, brought two files, which I purchased from him for a few charges of gunpowder, but until the return of Tinta's messenger, I was obliged to postpone repairing the gun-lock. When the required instrument did come, it was too late to do anything, so Karissa stayed all night, turning in upon an ox-skin, and sharing the porch of my house with Goodaloo.

The next morning (Aug. 25) I set about the business, and managed to put all to rights before noon, during which time we had a long conversation upon the origin of the Galla, and, in fact, of all other nations, for the traditions he related reached to the very remotest times. How far his

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information was founded upon recorded history I cannot say, but he referred it to the conversations of some priests of Guragué, with whom the early part of his life had been spent, and much of what I collected upon this subject (the ethnology of the inhabitants of Abyssinia) from Karissa, was by his asking if such and such a thing that he had heard were true. Ibrahim was as much amused as I was, for, without supposing it, our Galla friend was contributing considerably to the knowledge of both.

Of the Gallas themselves, he could only tell me that they originally came from *Bargamo*, which was represented to be a large water, across which the distant opposite side was just visible. That their ancestors, dwelling upon the farther shore, were induced to come over into Abyssinia, which they soon overran and conquered. Karissa always pointed to the south as the situation of *Bargamo*, or I was inclined to suppose that by this was intended the country around the shores of lake Tchad, the eastern portion of which, we learn from Clapperton and Denham, is called Berghamie. He was very curious to know if I were of a nation of whites of whom he had heard, called *Surdi*, and which, in his system of mankind lore, constituted one of the three great divisions of mankind into which the whole world was divided. There was no question about himself, for he was a Tokruree, or black, whilst Ibrahim, although not much

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lighter complexioned, was an Amhara, or red man. The *Surdi* he insisted as existing, and was contented to believe, although I did not seem to know anything about them, that I was of that race.

His fathers, Karissa said, all believed that at one period the people of the whole earth were of one colour and language, and that the first man, like Adam, was produced from clay. Here I may observe, that the Abyssinians all contend that the real signification of the word Adam is first, and is a form of Adu, the Geez for the numeral one, and as such was once used to designate the first day of the week, and the first month of the year. Kádama is also another modification of the same word, signifying *before* the first. A very interesting comparison can be therefore made between the Mosaical account of the Creation and that which has been preserved in Manetho as the Phœnician record of the same event; for the name of the first mortal in the list *Primogenus* will bear an interpretation similar to the Geez translation of Adam, or *the first.* That which makes the identity more striking between the two narratives is, that the name of the first woman, according to Manetho, or rather the older writer, Sanchoniathon, was Æon, which is the very word that is given in the Genesis of the Geez Scriptures as the name of our common mother, and which, by tracing it through its modifications in Arabic, Hebrew, and the Greek, to our own language, will be found to

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be the original of the word Eve. That Æon appears to have been the word which designated the mother of mankind, we have the circumstance that it retains the signification of mother to the present day, with slight alterations depending upon dialects; for the Amhara of Tigre call the word mother, Eno, whilst in Shoa, Enart is the term employed. The connexion of the name Eve with the motive given for bestowing it, contained in the third chapter of Genesis, cannot, in fact, be perceived unless we admit this interpretation; for we are expressly told, that Adam gave his wife that name because "she was the *mother* of all living." To this also I may add, that by deriving the name *Adam* from the Geez *Adu*, giving that name both to the man and woman, as in the second verse of the fifth chapter of Genesis, "And calling *their* name *Adam*," occasions no confusion, as it implies simply that they were *the first*. I have brought home with me two or three Ethiopic manuscripts relative to the subject of the creation of the world; for I believe by a careful comparison we shall find still retained in Geez literature the original from which Sanchoniathon, and perhaps other historians, have derived the accounts, at present received, of the first creation of man; at all events, the Amhara reject the authority of Genesis, and adhere to one which accords much more with the profane historian of the Phœnicians.

To return, however, to Karissa and the Galla people, their ancient history is no less interesting, nor

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will it prove less important when we possess fuller information respecting the religion they profess. It is such a field for conjecture that I decline to enter upon the subject, except to note that they worship a limited number of principal deities, but recognising also a numerous host of demigods, whose influence upon man and his affairs are exerted most malevolently, and who can only be propitiated by sacrifices and entreaties. *Waak*, however, appears to be the supreme god who made the world and every inferior deity. Waak has no visible representative, but is everywhere, and exists in everything. He is the limit of all knowledge; for "*Waak segallo*" (God knows) invariably expresses ignorance of a fact, and the best definition of him I could get from the most informed Galla I ever conversed with upon the subject was, that he was the "unknown God." Waak is, I think, the only deity proper to the Galla people, although long intercourse with the Gongas has made them acquainted with a mythology which would show, had I only space to enter into the subject, a most extraordinary connexion with that of the ancient Egyptians. They have also derived some knowledge of one or two of the principal saints *worshipped* by the Greek Church, and according to their situation with respect to the Christians of Abyssinia or the Pagans of Zingero, so is their religion modified by the errors or absurdities of their neighbours, and which is another reason why I suspect that

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originally the unknown god Waak, was alone the object of pure Galla worship. It is singular that very ancient travellers, Cosmas Indicopleustes, for example, surround the then known world by a *terra incognita* which is inscribed as Wak-wak; whilst Edrisi, the old Arabian geographer, makes this the name also by which he describes the present Galla countries, and which d'Lisle, by an interesting Gascon provincialism, as it aids me in my interpretation, makes this word Bake-bake, and places it to the south of Abyssinia, I have been led therefore to believe that the worship of the most ancient god of India, which European nations in the classic ages adopted under the name of Bacchus, was supposed to characterize the inhabitants of the regions that were so designated, and hence the reason of describing unknown countries as lands of *Wak-wak*. If so, and *Waak* can be by future travellers identified by other particulars with the Bacchus of the ancients, it will be a most important corroboration of the origin of the Galla with an Asiatic people who invaded Africa at a very early period. It is not one volume that would exhaust this subject; nor is it one journey that can give a traveller a just right to impose his opinions upon his readers. The dissipation of a deal of obscurity respecting the earlier history of man, and, in fact, of his original nature, and of his primeval institutions, will be the glorious reward of future enterprise; and since the days of Columbus,

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no subject of more stirring interest, or of greater importance has been discussed, than the probability of finding in Central Africa a country characterized by the civilization of China, but more purely sustained in its original excellence by its isolated position, surrounded by burning deserts, that like "flaming swords," turn every way to keep the way of "the tree of life." To me, it almost appears such a community of man is shadowed out in the mystical language of the sacred historian; and though I do not expect to find a paradise, still there is that in Central Africa that will well reward those adventurous spirits who will press on to explore its unknown portions.

The empty iron-bound chest taught the man who opened it, industry; and even if no wonderful discovery be made, knowledge, must result from a journey across the mysterious continent.

I return again to Karissa and his system of ethnology, for out of the question of my being one of the nation of whites, or *Surdi*, a conversation grew, by which I perceived the very simple system of the original separation of man that is entertained by the Abyssinians, and their ideas upon which are singularly confirmed by what is observed in our own extent of knowledge. This is, that originally three families of man occupied three distinct countries, each divided by their respective seas; and that Tokruree, the blacks, were separated from the whites by a white sea; which I find actually to

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mean the Mediterranean, so called by Arabian geographers, from being supposed to belong to the white people. The red people, again, were the Asiatics, the Assyrians of Jewish historians; and the sea which separated them from Tokruree, or Africa, was, and is called to the present day, the Red Sea, from the reason of its being situated upon the borders of a country inhabited by a red race of men; whilst the black people, had also their particular sea, which is that which intervenes between India and Zanzibar, and which still bears that name in Arabic and Indian geographies. This simple division of the earth seems to have been the popular idea of ethnology at a very early period; for all the various names of Alps, Albania, Albion, and numerous others, of Latin and Greek combination, having reference to this colour, prove that the ancient designation of Europeans was "the whites," and which appears to have been as general and as familiar a term to use, as is the word blacks, or Negroes, or Tokruree, when, at the present day, we speak of those coloured inhabitants of Africa; whilst on the other hand the derivation of Asia from Assa, a word which signifies red, is both easy and natural. Of the word Tokruree, and its Geez signification, my reader must be well aware that it means *blacks*, or Negroes, and is the significant and expressive designation of those people.

After some more conversation upon the same

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subjects, as the day was drawing to a close, Karissa took up his musket, and made preparations for departing; but before he went insisted upon my promising to ask the Negoos that he might be allowed to accompany me to Enarea when I went, to which place he undertook to conduct me, through Guragué, with perfect safety, and would only require such a present as I could give him, upon our return to Shoa. The journey would not require more than one month to accomplish it, including all detentions and necessary delays. It only required, he said, the permission of the Negoos; who, in that case, would send an affaro, or servant, to see me safe upon my journey, and to bear the royal commands for assistance to his governors or friends. It was this appointment of affaro Karissa desired, and none other could have been better qualified, had circumstances been so ordered as to have admitted of my proceeding farther; but situated as I was, worn out by disease, and reduced to my last seven or eight dollars, I could hold out no hope to Karissa beyond saying that I should apply to the Negoos for permission to go to Enarea, and if I went he should be sure to accompany me.

I learned from this man that Sahale Selassee possesses at least one thousand firearms, of which three or four hundred are European muskets. Of these the British Embassy had presented three hundred, and before its return one hundred and

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forty more had been brought up by M. Rochet d'Hericourt. With the Kafilah I accompanied there were more than fifty pistols, all of which were given by the Ambassador to the Negoos. These small weapons were quite unsuited to Amhara soldiers, who like long shots about as well as any military, it has ever been my fortune to observe in actual combat. The pistols, however, were not altogether useless, for, by the orders of the sagacious monarch, several of the best matchlocks were immediately new stocked and fitted with the locks of the former, and were thus rendered much more available as fire-arms.

There are no less than four descriptions of guns in the armoury of the Negoos. The first and most ancient being termed *balla quob*, are immense long old-fashioned affairs. Each require three or four individuals to hold, whilst another runs up with a lighted stick to discharge it; when those who stand behind, find it most desirable to get out of the way, for the recoil throws it several yards out of the hands of the gunmen. The second kind is called *balla matatchah*, and is the common matchlock; many of these, I was assured, were formerly *balla quob*, but that a Gypt several years before had visited Shoa, and so far benefited the Negoos by reducing his long pieces into something like portable guns. The next kind, and most in favour, were the English and French muskets,

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called *balla dinghi*, and only to those whom he most favoured did the monarch trust these much prized arms, every one of which is valued by him at twenty dollars, the price of two beautiful young horses. The *balla tezarb*, or percussion guns, are those which have come to the Negoos by the voluntary contribution of strangers, or the direct application of the monarch for the coveted weapon at whatever price may be demanded. My single-barreled fowling-piece was destined to the same resting-place with nearly all the valuable stock of private fire-arms brought up to Shoa by the members of the Embassy, who found it very difficult to retain more than one or two guns each for their own use. The less valuable of these *balla tezarb* are distributed among the superior courtiers as great marks of favour, and besides, two or three favourite pages have occasionally lent to them, by the Negoos, guns for their amusement; and he rewards them also for such petty services as cannot well be paid in any other manner, by scanty donations of four or five percussion caps at a time. These constitute a good coin in the precincts of the palace, and a great deal of attention and civility may be commanded in exchange for a few caps.

The Shoan gunpowder, as I have before described, is very bad, and also, from the want of lead, all manufactured bullets are made of small pieces of iron, hammered into a round form. Many of the

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gunmen, however, are obliged to substitute small round pebbles, as the Negoos never distributes to each more than five or seven of the iron ones, on occasions even of the most extensive expeditions.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

Message from the Negoos.—Visit Ankobar.—The Monk Bethlehem.—Conversation.—Bad weather.—A tattooing operation.—Interview with Negoos.

Some few days after Karissa had visited me, an affaro came from the palace at Ankobar, with a message that I should proceed immediately to see the Negoos. On inquiring what circumstance had occurred to occasion such a sudden and urgent summons, I learned that a Gypt priest had arrived from Gondah, and that he spoke English, and for all that my informant knew, might be an *ascar* (a subject or servant) of my Queen. As soon as I heard this, I was in a great hurry to be away, although, had I consulted common prudence, I should certainly have postponed the interview, upon the plea of the exceedingly weak state in which I was, and the violence of fever attacks every other day, especially as the height of Ankobar was entombed in clouds, nor had I seen its summit for several days past. A mule, however, being procured, and certain resting-places during the ride having been determined upon, where friends of Walderheros or Goodaloo resided, I

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started early in the afternoon, and after occupying the remainder of the day in the ascent, I arrived at Musculo's house by sunset. Walderheros went up to the palace to announce my arrival, and returned in the course of half an hour with a turbaned monk, barefooted, and with the usual soft yellow leathern cape of his order over his shoulders. He was an elderly man, spare and short, but he came along actively enough, and as he entered the house, with a good English accent accosted me with, "How do you do?" He soon gave me an account of himself and of his business in Shoa. His present name was Bethlehem, but by birth he was an Armenian, who had become somewhat educated in European languages and customs, by a military service of many years with the Dutch. From other sources I heard that he had distinguished himself greatly in several conflicts, and had received a medal for some particularly dashing exploit. He, however, had now forsworn the world and all its vanities, and after a residence of several years in Abyssinia, had assumed the turban of the clergy of the Greek Church in that country, and probably was among the most correct in conduct, of the members of that rather lax ministry.

He sat down upon my alga, and after a few sensible observations upon the evil of countrymen not being on good terms in a country so situated as Shoa, and the bad effect produced upon the mind of the King by the previous quarrels of

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the Embassy with their servants* and their own people, he then turned the conversation upon a

* Major Harris, in his "Highlands of Ethiopia," has made the following assertions:—"In utter abhorrence of the country and its inhabitants, the Moslem servants who accompanied the Embassy from India all took their departure, willing to brave the dangers and difficulties of a long journey through the inhospitable deserts of Adaîel, rather than prolong a hateful sojourn in Abyssinia. One half of the number were murdered on their way down, and the places of all long remained empty." This is most unjust both to the Dankalli and the Abyssinian, for of the twenty native and Arab servants, independent of the two tent Lascars mentioned as having accompanied the Mission, eight only were dismissed in Shoa—Sultaun, Hadjji Abdullah, Allee Chous, Berberah Allee, Abbas, Mahudee, Hadjji Ohmed, and an Indian boy, whose name I have forgotten. These servants had been led to expect, on their arrival in Abyssinia, the payment of the high wages which, in some of their cases, had alone induced them to accompany the Mission through Adal. Their disappointment may be conceived when they were then informed that a moiety only of their wages would be paid to them in Shoa, and that the remainder would run on in arrears until their return to Aden. This injustice, as it was conceived to be, was resented, and the discharge of these eight, in this remote country, was the consequence. The unfortunate servants appealed to the Negoos for redress, who condescended (but without avail) to intercede for their return to the Mission. This affront to the royal dignity was never forgotten, whilst a very injurious prejudice was raised by the conduct that was pursued by our representative with reference to the non-performance of the engagements entered into with these men. This being followed shortly afterwards by the infliction of corporeal punishment upon a soldier for a breach of martial law, when no other kind of discipline was even pretended to be kept up, astonished the Abyssinians not a little, and gave the finishing blow to all popular respect for English civilization, or wishes for any connexion whatever with our country.

But this is not all. Of the eight discharged servants, instead of the whole of these men showing any abhorrence of the country,

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subject which he said was of great interest to the Negoos, who had been talking to him respecting it for the last two days. This was the production of indigo in Shoa, seeds of which plant had been received from Gondah, and the Negoos desired me to point out the situation I considered to be most favourable for their cultivation. Judging from the character of the country bordering upon the Ganges, its probable elevation above the sea, and its geographical position, I had no hesitation in stating, from the comparison, that many of the little islands of the finest alluvial soil, situated in the bed of the Dinkee river, where it extends in broad valleys in the neigh-

the greater part of them took to themselves wives, and upon what little they had saved lived near me in Aliu Amba. Three of them, however (Hadjji Ohmed, Mahudee, and the Indian boy), were induced to attempt a passage to the sea-coast. The Kafilah they accompanied was attacked on the eastern bank of the Hawash by the Takalee tribe. The Indian boy was slain, but Hadjji Ohmed and Mahudee, being mounted, fled different ways; the former fortunately found protection and shelter for more than a month with Omah Batta's sub-division of the Sidee Ahbreu tribe, whilst Mahudee contrived to reach a much more distant portion of Adal, the country of Chur-Chur, on the road to Hurrah from Shoa. Here he also remained several weeks, receiving the greatest attention and kindness, and finally was restored, as was also Hadjji Ohmed, to the *Negoos* of Shoa, who rewarded their *Adal* entertainers for their hospitality to British subjects.

It may be naturally supposed that the author of the "Highlands of Ethiopia" was ignorant of these facts, but this is impossible, for Mahudee, who had visited Chur-Chur, was reinstated in his situation as horsekeeper to Major Harris himself, in return for the interesting information it was supposed he could give of the little-known country where he had been living.

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bourhood of Farree, would be well calculated for the interesting experiment.

Our conversation was not, however, altogether upon this subject, but merely that I might be prepared for the interview the next day with the Negoos, when Bethlehem was to act as interpreter. Information respecting the state of Northern Abyssinia, as regarded differences in the manners and customs of the inhabitants from those of Shoa, was freely volunteered by my new acquaintance, but who was exceedingly cautious and reserved upon political matters, so that I supposed that the discussion was a delicate one, and that his visit to the Negoos was connected with some business of that kind. Bethlehem is an intelligent man, and might be made exceedingly useful, and as his knowledge of the English language appears to give him a bias towards the interests of this country, his probable value as an agent, must not be passed over without being remarked. As he was nearly twice as old as myself, I talked just as much the more in proportion, for I had no other way of parrying the questions that his apparently careless curiosity prompted him to make. I knew nothing of the objects for which the Embassy had been sent to the Court of Shoa; at least nothing beyond what might naturally be supposed—such as the extension of our commerce, and the establishment of friendly relations with

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native princes; farther than this I was quite ignorant of the purposes for which our Government had sent political agents into Abyssinia. To learn this, was evidently the chief object that Bethlehem had in view, during our long conversation; but I think he went away with an impression, that I knew nothing about it, and that the assumed mystery of my hints and suggestions was all affectation to make him believe that my information upon the subject was very valuable indeed. If so, I had reason to be very glad; for after this interview, no political questions were ever asked me by any of the agents of the Negoos; and he himself, during the interview the next day but one, confined himself entirely to matters connected solely with the improvements and arts, that my education would enable me to introduce a knowledge of among his subjects.

I sat all the next morning expecting the summons for me to go up to the palace, but no messenger appearing, and symptoms of the approach of my fever fit coming on, I sent Walderheros to Bethlehem, to represent to the Negoos, the impossibility of my going to the palace that day, and to ask for an interview early the next morning, that I might leave Ankobar immediately after, for it was impossible that I could exist many days in that city.

Oh, the weather in Ankobar! To look out of

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Musculo's house was like looking into a boiling-house in a brewery, which I presume is always full of steam. But was it warm? had it that dryness which even the vapour of hot water may be said to have? No; by heavens! for the atmosphere was one heavy drizzling perpetual Scotch mist, whilst the earth beneath was one rich surface of sloppy greasy mud. No life seemed stirring, except occasionally, when some closely wrapped-up figure came like a ghost emerging from a cloud, and jumping under the thatched roof, threw off his thick cotton *legumbigalla*, and stamping the dirt and wet off his feet and legs, loudly expostulated with the wet season for bringing such inconveniences with its rain.

In the afternoon, Tinta came down with his Court train of servants, to see me at Musculo's house. I happened just then to be lying under the influence of the ague fit, so he only remained to express his sorrow at seeing me in such a condition, and promised that he would ask the Negoos to receive me early in the morning, that I might not be detained any longer in Ankobar than was absolutely necessary.

During this stay at Musculo's house, I observed the tattooing process by which the Shoan ladies disfigure their faces with large artificial eyebrows of a black colour; for nearly the whole day was occupied by Eichess ornamenting in this manner, the broadly round face of her fat slave-girl,

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Mahriam. It appeared to be no joke, although, if a ridiculous absurdity could have suspended my predisposition to the fever paroxysm, it would have been this beautifying operation. The whole year previously, every depilatory means by which to eradicate the natural hairs of the eyebrows had been employed, and the pertinacious industry with which this had been done, I noticed on my previous visit had occasioned an expression of vacuity that was not at all wanted in the ever-smiling expanse of countenance which Mahriam displayed over a bust, breast, and body, so large and fat, that darkened the house immediately if she stood a moment in the wide door-way. One half of the right eye-brow had been done two or three days previously, a very promising dry scab of charcoal and the natural secretion consequent upon a sore had formed, and which was looked at by Eichess with all the interest that a mother may be supposed to examine the progress of the virus influence upon her recently vaccinated child. In a word, it was pronounced to be promising very well, and the instruments and dye were then produced to finish the buisness. Eichess sat upon a boss of straw, and Mahriam knelt down before her, whilst Walderheros, to encourage the latter to bear the pain with fortitude, told her to be sure and recollect she was a *man*. A bundle of long white thorns, which I recognised as belonging to the commonest kind of mimosa, were now taken from a rag in which

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they were folded, and one being selected, Eichess commenced with it a dotting kind of puncturing in the skin, along a semicircular line, previously marked with a piece of charcoal around the frontal edge of the orbit, and which, besides including the bald part of the original eyebrow, was prolonged considerably towards the lower part of the temple, and also extended to the middle of the space between the eyes, where it met the similar delineation coming from the other side. Blood soon flowed freely, and I could scarcely have imagined it possible that such a punishment could be sustained for the attainment of so unnatural an ornament. Custom must constitute the principal part of original sin, or such barbarous attempts as these to improve upon nature would not be persisted in from one generation to another. The ladies of antiquity, I recollect learning when I was a student, employed a black mineral, *stibium*, supposed to be *plumbago*, or black lead; for the purpose, says Celsus, of making them black browed, and this fashion, with many others, appears to have been early introduced into Abyssinia, either by the Greeks or Romans, and has been continued in that country to the present day. The manner in which a lady of fashion dresses her hair in Shoa, in a series of close pipe-like curls, is identically the same with the head-dress represented in the bust of Octavia, the niece of Augustus, in the British Museum, (Chamber vi. No. 65,) and I should require no other woodcut to illustrate

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this Abyssinian fashion than a drawing of that bust.

After the painful process had concluded as regarded one eyebrow, a mixture of powdered charcoal and water was made, and a little rag being first dipped into this was then rubbed over the fresh wound, until a sufficient quantity of the blacking dye had become absorbed, when the blood was washed from her face, and Mahriam was complimented by all for her fortitude and improved appearance. With the most simple gratitude the well-pleased girl stoops and kisses, with an affectionate obeisance, the hand of her indulgent mistress.

A similar operation is sometimes performed over the front part of the gums, and upon the inner surface of the lips, where I should conceive the most excruciating pain must be occasioned by the process. What girls will suffer for the sake of gaining admiration is most astonishing; but, however, they are not all so silly as this in Shoa, for, in justice to the Tabeeb women, I must observe that this custom is not practised among them, and the consequence is, that the younger females of this very singular people, are the handsomest in the country. In addition to the tattooed eyebrows it is not unusual to observe the figure of a Geez letter ጠ, which I am told is a very ancient Egyptian symbol expressive of the unity of the Deity. All idea of this signification is lost, but the Abyssinians account for the employ-

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ment of this mark upon the forehead because it is said to exert a very benign influence upon the bearer. Besides the physical appearances which led me to consider that the Christians of the Malabar coast of India I have seen, were emigrants from Southern Abyssinia, was the circumstance of this very symbol being tattooed between the eyebrows in exactly the same manner as it is borne by the Shoan women.

Before nine o'clock the next day a message came down from the palace for me to attend upon the Negoos, and although my shoes let in water and even mud very freely, and the drizzling fog threatened soon to wet me to my skin, I took the long *zank* which was given me to assist in the ascent up the steep hill, and I started with the desperation of a man who had given up all hopes of ever being permitted to dismount again from death's grey steed, disease, which, at a hard trot, for nearly the last two years, had been carrying me towards the grave.

The palace of Ankobar lifts its thatched roofs above the summit of a high pyramidal hill, the abrupt termination of the narrow spur-like ridge upon which Ankobar stands. Three sides are singularly regular, and appear as if cut into an angular pyramidal cone, that rises two or three hundred feet above the level of the ridge to which it is connected on the fourth side. A high stockade of splintered *ted* winds spirally from midway, to the last enclosure upon the top of the hill,

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wherein stand the royal buildings. The lower portion of the palisades skirt for some distance the road into Ankobar from the valley of the Airahra, and the first house upon the elevated ridge may be said to be the palace, for its large and rudely-formed wooden gates on the left hand, are the first doorway perceived by the weary traveller after having ascended to the level of the town.

If, however, he look over the precipices to the right, the whole way up, he will perceive hundreds of the thatched roofs of little circular houses, in which the greater number of the Royal slaves and servants reside with their families. These descend by a quick succession of little gardened terraces to the meadow-like but limited plateau that intervenes some distance, before the actual bed of the Airahra river is gained. If the traveller looks from his elevated position in this direction, and if it be a bright day, a splendid prospect extends before him. Houses, the straw tops of which he could jump down upon, so steep is the descent, conceal the view of those which are immediately below; but jutting beyond these, fringe-like enclosures of the thick foliage of the *shokoko-gwoman* and the *amharara* trees, and low-thatched roofs buried in gardens of the broad-leaved *ensete* or *koba* banana plant, appear, falling rapidly to the undulating broad meadow, studded with numerous little eminences, where solitary, but snug-looking farmhouses are sheltered by tall flat-topped

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mimosas or the pine-like growing ted. Partial glimpses of the winding Airahra beyond; here, where it meanders sluggishly through a verdant mead, or there, where a silver column marks a distant fall; the opposite grey cliffs of the Tchakkah range, dotted with dark green clumps of the huge crimson-flowering *cosso*, all aid in filling up the background of a picture of real beauty and of apparent peace, upon which the eye and mind can dwell for hours untired, contemplating with a pleased sympathy of delight, upon a scene that appears so adapted for a practical experiment of Utopian colonization, the object of which should be the fullest development of human happiness and excellence.

I did not stop to-day, except when violent palpitation of the heart and the greatest oppression in breathing obliged me to come to a stand to recover myself after climbing up some stairs formed of the trunks of trees, that placed me upon a level position or landing-place; several of which aids in the steep ascent, characterize the King's highway into Ankobar. Leaning upon Walderheros, I turned under the arch-way of the first gate, and passed through a narrow court, or partition, between two succeeding enclosures. Then beneath another gate-house, over which the clanking of chains needed no interpretation from my servant that it was the Royal prison for the temporary confinement of culprits. In the sheltered passage thus formed, I sat upon a huge stone to rest,

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whilst a long string of donkeys descended, coming from the storehouses above, where they had been delivering grain and berberah for the use of the palace. A long irregular series of wooden steps in a winding curve along the side of the hill, brought us to the last enclosure upon the summit. Here a little wicket leads to a high terrace-walk, having on one side a long row of pallisades, and on the other, a clear and open view of the broad and deep valley of the Airahra, whilst before the visitor, stands a rude stone arch, but of what character, its architect, Demetrius, would be at a loss to say; this occupies the whole width of the terrace-walk, or about eighteen feet wide, and is from twelve to fifteen feet high. The gateway is about six feet wide and about nine feet high, and is closed by one large door, in which a lesser one for ordinary purposes is cut. After staying a short time in a little shed near the first wicket, and in which the porter is sheltered from the weather, Tinta appeared at the gate of Demetrius, and called me to come immediately, and in a very few moments I was introduced into a small room, where, upon a raised iron hearth, a good fire was burning. Here, on his usual throne, a white cloth covered alga, the Negoos was reclining, and in close conversation with the monk Bethlehem, who, sitting cross-legged on an ox-skin below, seemed to have been giving his opinion upon four or five rifles that lay before him upon the floor.

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After the usual salutations were made, and an ox-skin had been spread for me, Walderheros, Tinta, and other attendants who had accompanied me into the room, were ordered to withdraw, and I began to suspect some political matters were to be the topic of our conversation. "Kaffu wobar," (fevers are bad things,) said the monarch, which Bethlehem translated rather unnecessarily, but it commenced my examination as to the relative merits of gun-barrels. I had to describe how they were manufactured; what was the differences between the plain and twisted; in what manner the grooves on the rifle were made; and whether long or short barrels were most economical for service. As regarded the latter query, the monarch showed his quickness in detecting any anomaly, or apparent contradiction; for having before asserted that the best gun he had showed me to-day was a strong two-ounce rifle, double-barreled, I said that the long Arab match-lock barrel was most inconvenient by reason of its great weight, when he instantly took the rifle and placed it in my hands, to show me that it was at least twice the weight of the one I now contemned.

From guns the conversation changed to the subject of dyes, which appeared to be of the next importance in the mind of Sahale Selassee. The scarlet colour of our country I told him required not vegetables for its production, but either insects or minerals; and I suppose Bethlehem had previously explained this to him, as he seemed satisfied with

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my statement without farther question. Indigo, I was able to promise him that I would undertake to cultivate, and make serviceable to his people by teaching them how to manufacture the dye, if that I recovered my health after the rains subsided, and which it was expected they would in the middle of this month (September). He inquired very particularly into the process, and I explained it to him as well as I could, and he complimented me by saying, that my services in thus extending a knowledge of useful arts among his children (subjects) would be of more value than all the rich gifts that had been brought to him by the commander (our ambassador). I was then asked for some medicine for his brother who was sick, Bethlehem interpreting the whole conversation that took place upon this subject.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

Conversation on medical matters with the Negoos.—Of Guancho.—The State prison.—The construction of its defences.—Good medicine for captives.—Its probable effect.—Of the Gallas.—Their invasion.—Of the Gongas.—Abyssinian slaves.—Conclusion.

A VERY singular circumstance connected with our conversation respecting the health of the brother of the Negoos was, that neither Bethlehem or myself recollected at first, that all the near relations of Sahale Selassee were incarcerated in prison, according to ancient Abyssinian custom, and which, I believe, was also practised in the kingdom of Judea, to secure, by this cruel policy, the monarch from personal danger, and the country from the evils inflicted by civil war, that might otherwise arise by the ambition or simplicity of the other branches of the Royal family, either acting itself or admitting of being acted upon by the arts of others.

The Shoan prison for these unfortunates is a high conical hill, called Guancho, situated midway between Aliu Amba and Farree, and is the residence of the Wallasmah Mahomed, who fills the office of State gaoler, as well as collector of

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duties upon that frontier of the kingdom. Here, at the period of this interview with the King, were confined five princes of the blood Royal, some of whom had been prisoners for as many as thirty, or thirty-four years.

From personal inspection of their apartments, an opportunity afforded to no other European besides, I can state that the close and rigorous confinement, said to have been imposed upon these captives, is much exaggerated; and, although the separate sleeping apartments at night were not more than seven feet in all their dimensions, still they were only composed of sticks, such as the common garden rods for raising peas in England, and a strong man leaning hard against them must have fallen out through the wall of his cell. Only two of the royal prisoners wore chains; these were on one hand and leg of the same side, and were long enough to admit of the freest motion. A long-thatched *wort bait*, or meat-house, contained their families; for not only did the King remember his captive brethren on days of festival, by sending them oxen, and honey-wine, but they were allowed to marry, and their wives lived with them in their confinement. I took a ground plan of the whole establishment, and the Wallasmah, who was too old to accompany me on my survey, when I was in the only place that looked like a dungeon at all, a vault about twenty feet square, cut out of the summit of the hill.

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stamped several times upon the roof to intimate that his sitting-room was over this secure place. In this dismal dungeon, however, no person had been confined for the last six or seven years, although it was being then prepared, by a second door being put up, for the occupation of the unfortunate Samma-negoos, an ex-frontier governor, who had assisted his brother, a denounced rebel, to escape to Ahgobba, where he is now entertained by the Mahomedan Prince of that country, Beroo Lobo. When I visited Guancho, this prisoner occupied a small den of sticks, not four feet wide in any direction, and his hands and feet were chained close together, so that his removal to the larger subterranean cell will, at all events, afford him some opportunities of exercise, though he will then be deprived of light and fresh air.

Although, therefore, the Royal prisoners did not enjoy life in a valley of delight, they certainly did not drag out a miserable existence upon the hill of despair. This would have been adding unnecessary cruelty to an exigency of State policy; an evil that would, I am convinced, have long before corrected itself, by the frequent escapes that would have been attempted, especially in a place that afforded such opportunities for obtaining personal freedom. An Abyssinian Baron Trenck would only have to wrench open the thin bar of soft iron which constitutes fetters in that country, and by three successive jumps through, not over, as many fences of rotten sticks, he would be as free as the wildest Galla, into whose

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country a walk of a few hours would take him. I did not show any lucifer matches, for I recollected that the Portuguese traveller Burmudez, had been confined in this very prison, and I did not know whether an act of incendiarism might not at a future time be available as a means of escape; for, it must be understood, at the time of this visit I had been threatened if I attempted to leave Shoa with the Embassy on their return to Aden, to be confined in Guancho, so desirous was the Negoos of detaining me with him.

Guancho, the State prisoners, nor the anxiety of his Majesty that I should remain in his service, can be entered into now; this is anticipating the occurrence of events, the relation of which must be excused from the increasing contraction of my limits, that prevents me from holding but a little more pleasant converse with my reader, who, I hope, so far has been conducted with an amused interest through the scenes of Dankalli and Abyssinia life, in which I was a participator during my sojourn in those countries.

Recalled to a recollection of the circumstances of the condition of the Royal relations, by a remark of the Negoos, Bethlehem turned to me, and commented upon the sanitary observances I had been recommending for the benefit of my supposed patient, as he was a prisoner, and I then learnt, that the Negoos was consulting me upon the subject of a disease, to which he was himself subject. The symptoms that he had detailed plainly indicated a

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great determination of blood to the head, and among other things which I had suggested as preventives of the occasional giddiness, dimness of sight, &c., which was complained of, was frequent exercise by walking, and recommended that this should be for some distance regularly every morning and evening. It was this which had led the Negoos to make some playful remark in his character, as his brother's representative, that this indeed would be a pleasant medicine for him, and which reminded the interpreter that if I went on prescribing in that way I might say something unpleasant to the Royal ear. Perhaps the unconscious shrug, with which I acknowledged our error operated upon the mind of the monarch more than any direct appeal that I could have made in favour of his unhappy relatives, and expressed more real sorrow than the cold interpretation of Bethlehem could have conveyed.*

The monarch soon after changed the subject by

* About two months after this interview the captive princes of the blood Royal were liberated from Guancho, in accordance with a vow made by the Negoos whilst lying upon a bed of sickness, under the impression that death was approaching, and that such an act would propitiate heaven favourably for his recovery. It was a spontaneous act, nor can any just claim be made by any one to have instigated the Negoos to take this step. During his illness he refused the aid and medicine of the Embassy, and it was a topic of public conversation, that a monarch possessed of such abilities, and so excellent a disposition as Sahale Selassee, should be so under the influence of suspicion, as even in the extremity of his illness on this occasion, he should have refused the proffered

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alluding to the bad state of my own health, and of the necessity of my remaining quiet in Aliu Amba until the termination of the wet season, which was expected about the middle of the present month. He did not forget to recommend to me the study of the Amharic language during that time, so that in the next expedition against the Galla, to which he had already invited me, I might be able to converse with him. The Negoos did not detain me much longer, but after telling me not to miss seeing the Muscal (at Debra Berhan on the 24th), if it were possible for me to come, he dismissed me, glad enough to escape from the fatiguing interview.

I returned to Musculo's house a great deal too

assistance of European skill and knowledge, of which he had had such evidences of superiority.

The attention of our Embassy was first called more particularly to the subject when the Ambassador and Captain Graham were desired to attend at the palace the day when the liberated captives came before their generous king. During that interview, when his heart felt naturally the pride of having acted in the manner he had done, Sahale Selassee turned to the English officers, whom he knew were compiling a book, and asked for a compliment, by saying, "Will you write this down?"

I shall make but one more remark, that if indirect influence is to be exaggerated into direct instigation, then I certainly claim to be considered as the liberator of the Shoan princes; for I possess evidence of the regard entertained for me by Sahale Selassee, and I have more than once hinted to his Majesty the difference that existed between the policy of European courts, as regarded the younger branches of royalty, and that which was observed in Shoa. To his courtiers, also, who conveyed to his ears every word that was said, I always denounced the custom of imprisonment as most absurd and cruel.

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tired to think of going on to Aliu Amba directly, but made up my mind to stay until an hour or two before sunset, to arrive in that town just in time for bed, and so escape the houseful of inquiring friends, who would have thronged around me with compliments and congratulations on my return.

To amuse me some portion of the time, Musculo introduced three of four slaves who had been brought from the more interesting countries around Shoa, and none of whom, as regards their political relations with that country, demand a more particular notice than the Gallas. These appear to surround Shoa on every side, except towards the north, where the Amhara inhabitants of the Argobba appear to have their country in that direction, continuous with the Shoan province of Efat; but even here a narrow belt of debateable land, by the mutual jealousies of the rulers of the two kingdoms, is left to the undisputed possession of some unsettled Adal Galla tribes.

I have several times, in the body of this work, represented these people as being the mixed descendants of the Dankalli and Shankalli people, and although this descent has been modified in some situations by contiguity to nations differing very considerably, both physically and morally, from each other, still all the numerous tribes that stretch on the eastern side of the table land of Abyssinia, from the neighbourhood of Massoah to an unknown distance in the south, speak one language, and

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practise nearly similar customs. The first disputed question respecting the Gallas is their origin, which is generally supposed to be foreign to the continent they now occupy, and from the name *Calla* resembling a Hebrew word signifying milk, it has been presumed that they were a white people of that nation, who have become changed in colour by a long residence in their present inter-tropical possessions. Modern travellers continue in supporting this supposition, but in recording my dissent I ask no one to adopt my opinion, I owe it to my readers to state my ideas upon a subject I have studied a little, and upon which I presume they require information. It is not, therefore, to attract attention by opposing received opinion, which I would much rather avoid, but for the sake of exciting discussion among abler men than myself, that I here throw out suggestions respecting the Gallas, as on other subjects I have done before.

The origin of the name Galla, from the Arian word *calla*, black, appears easy and natural, and I have therefore adopted it, but shall feel greatly indebted to any learned ethnologist who will correct me if I am in error. The country their presumed parents occupied, is that in which, from its situation, no other complexioned people could reside, whilst that law of nature continues to exist which has imposed a black skin upon men living in a very hot country.

We find, however, these so-called blacks in

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geographical situations, quite at variance with that betokened by the dark colour of their skin, and more particularly upon the elevated plateau of Abyssinia, the natural country of the pale yellow Gonga, where their appearance presents an apparent anomaly, which, fortunately, history enables us to explain. The first intrusion of the Amhara I have in another place endeavoured to show was in the time of the Egyptian king, Psammetichus, and to trace their history, in connexion with the changes consequent upon their colonization of the left banks of the Abi and the Abiah, would be most easy and interesting; for the present generation possess sufficient documentary evidence, to supply the necessary materials; but until some indefatigable scholar takes upon himself this task, I have no hope of seeing that obscurity dispelled which hangs over the earlier history of mankind, and which is intimately connected with the earlier history of Abyssinia. With this part of my subject, however, at present we have nothing to do, and must call attention to the fact, that the first recorded appearance of the Galla in Abyssinia, as hostile invaders, was in 1537, during the reign of the Emperor David, otherwise called Onag Segued. By this must be understood that it was at that time they first found themselves able to assert their independence. A more favourable opportunity could not have been afforded them than that offered, when the Mahomedan King of Adal, Mahomed Grahne, conquered and overran

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considerable portions of the ancient empire. To the distractions and misfortunes that then harassed the Christian Court the Gallas contributed, led on by sheer destiny, I believe, for they quietly took possession with their herds of the countries that had been devastated during the long civil sectarian war which, at the time of Grahne, had assumed a national character from the divisions of the Christian and Mahomedan Amhara, being then under two distinct monarchial governments. These two kindred people mutually destroying each other, were unable to offer any resistance to the lawless and barbarous intruders who were alone benefited by the struggle for supremacy between the professors of these two faiths.

The Adal conquerors, however, lost a great deal more by the war than the defeated Christians of the table land; for occupying a country of much less elevation than Abyssinia, the Gallas naturally located themselves first upon the lands so much more suited to their habits and constitutions, and accordingly, the Dankalli, closing from the north, whilst the Shankalli came up from the south, their progeny soon swept from the face of the country their Amhara predecessors; and the red man of America retreats no faster before civilization, than on this coast of Africa, the latter has been extinguished by the advance of the barbarian Gallas. Only one town remains of the once mighty kingdom of Adal, the city of Hurrah, the former capital of

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Mahomed Grahne, before whose time Christianity was here at least tolerated and professed by numbers of its inhabitants. Within the last century another lingering remnant of this population of Adal has been entirely driven out. Owssa, now exclusively Mahomedan Dankalli, was formerly the capital of Amhara kings of Adal, and the traditions of the present occupiers record the late residence in that country of a Christian population. After the death of Mahomed Grahne and the expulsion of the Jesuits from Abyssinia, the attention of its princes was first directed to the increasing evil of Galla intrusion, and they then endeavoured unsuccessfully, to recover those portions of the table-land upon which they had established themselves.

It is admitted that the Gallas entered Abyssinia, through the natural breach in its surrounding rampart on the east, where the denuding operation of the Hawash has constructed a favourable high road for the journeyings of a nation. Had a similar facility existed to the south, such as would be afforded, for example, by the debouché, of a river from the table land in that situation, we may be assured that the national integrity of the Gonga people, who, in the north, were unable to contend against the intruding Amhara, would have found it very difficult to contend with the more warlike Galla; yet who, it will be found, have made less impression there than in any other situation upon the whole table land.

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It appears that Fatagar, Efat, Shoa, then Damot, (which at that period extended to the south of the river Abi,) were successively taken possession of, a succession of conquests which prove that the course of the Hawash, was the principal natural direction this people took in their wanderings.

In Shoa and Efat they appear to have been early civilized. One of the most characteristic traits of the Galla people is, the facility with which they appear to adopt the religious creeds of their neighbours; and the adjoining kingdom of Amhara, the central stronghold of the Christian religion, afforded numerous opportunities of conversion, and perhaps other favourable circumstances then existed of which we are now ignorant; but the result has been a closer amalgamation of the Gallas with the Amhara people in Shoa than, I believe, any other country of Abyssinia presents. Whilst, therefore, an exceedingly corrupt dialect of the Amharic language is there spoken, the dark colour of their skin attests their close consanguinity with the Galla invaders, coming from the low hot country immediately at the foot of the Abyssinian scarp in this situation.

The Galla, physically speaking, are a fine race of men, tall, muscular, and well formed. In the colour of their skin they vary considerably, as may be supposed, from the differences of situation and of neighbourhood in which they have located themselves. The Edjow Gallas, to the north of Angotcha, are, I understand, of a lighter colour

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than the real Amhara or red man, but it is probable that some mistake exists as regards this statement. The Gallas of Limmoo are very dark-coloured, but they live in a country considerably more elevated than that of the Edjow Gallas. The Shoans themselves, who are considerably more Galla than Amhara, are a very dark brown, although several light red individuals, not born in Shoa, but more to the north, as I was told by Sheik Tigh, are to be found among them.

In the expression of the Galla countenance there is that which reminds the observer more of their Shankalli than of their Dankalli origin. The form of their heads is long, the sides being flat, with very contracted but not receding foreheads. The lower parts of their faces have the full negro-form development of the lips and jaws, although the teeth are regular and well set, without the inclination forwards I have observed in several negro skulls. Their hair is coarse and frizzly. It is generally worn in long narrow plaits, that hang directly down upon the neck and shoulders. In Shoa it is customary to dress it with considerable care, and it is then sometimes arranged in most fantastic forms, the head being adorned all over with numerous small collected tufts, and at others, three monstrous heaps of hair on the sides and top make the head and face look like a huge ace of clubs. Their natural dispositions are very good, and their courage is undoubted.

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It is very interesting to remark how readily the Galla appear to adapt their national habits to the circumstances in which they are placed. This seems to be a kind of instinct in man, or perhaps is an element of that moral development which seems to determine those occasionally mysterious inroads of a new people, who seem to have sprung up at once to exert the most extensive changes in the history of nations, and which then subsides again for another term of ages. Such was the appearance of the Mongols in Asia, and of the Goths in Europe; such was the appearance of the Arabians after Mahomed; and such are the Gallas of the present day, who are gradually appropriating to themselves the whole of the Abyssinian empire. This moral principle, however, whatever it may be, seems to promise an abundant harvest of converts to the zealous and intelligent missionary, who shall first appear as the professed apostle of Christianity among them.

Besides the Gallas whom I saw at Musculo's, were several Zingero and Kuffah slaves, and as these are the principal representatives of the Gonga people, of whom I have frequently spoken, I shall take this opportunity of more particularly describing them. The Gongas are a mysterious people, of whom rumours alone had reached the civilized world in the remotest antiquity, and the same obscurity continues at the present time to hang over this interesting and secluded nation.

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With the evidence I collected during my travels in Abyssinia, it will not be presumption in me to call attention to a few facts that appear to me calculated to throw some little light upon this subject, and which may probably excite a greater desire to become better acquainted with the hidden secrets of man's history contained in the heart of Africa.

The Gongas, in the era of the celebrated Egyptian king Psammeticus, occupied the whole table-land of Abyssinia. Neither Amhara, or Galla, had, as yet, appeared upon their naturally defended and very extensive fortress. In their social institutions the great principle of foreign policy, was the exclusion of strangers; and their isolated situation, easily enabled them to effect this. One character of civilization, the geography of the desert-surrounded table-lands of Africa, is eminently calculated to prosper and promote, that peculiar social condition, the consistency and continuance of which, requires little or no intercourse to be kept up with the rest of mankind; the isolated members of which, live contented among themselves, uninfluenced by wants which could only be gratified by the products of other lands. In such African communities, no inland seas, or navigable rivers, afford that facility of intercourse which is enjoyed (as it is presumed) by the inhabitants of more highly favoured countries. Protected also from foreign invasion by vast and almost impassable deserts, individual enterprize could scarcely be tempted to keep up a communi-

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cation with a people so situated, provided that they adhered to the principles of contentment, and did not allow themselves to be seduced into a desire for foreign luxuries; an unwise indulgence in which, first leads to molestation from commercial intruders; who, breaking up the seclusion, open a path to military invasion, which usually ends in the loss of country and of personal freedom.

We hear of the Gongas in ancient history under various names, but they were principally characterized by the cautious manner in which they communicated with those merchants, with whom nature imperatively commanded them, at least, to have some intercourse to exchange the productions of their country, for what was an absolute necessary of life to them, and of which they had no supply but from abroad; I need scarcely mention, that this was salt. In return for this, it appears, that gold was principally given to the traders; and for ages, this commerce was carried on, with no more communication than was necessary, through the medium of the following practice. "This country of Sasu is very rich in gold mines. Every year the King of Axum sends some of his people to this place for gold. These are joined by many other merchants; so that, altogether, they form a caravan of about five hundred people. They carry with them oxen, salt, and iron. When they arrive upon the frontiers of that country they take up their quarters, and make a large barrier of thorns. In the

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meantime having slain and cut up their oxen, they lay the pieces of flesh, as well as the iron, and salt, upon the thorns. Then come the inhabitants, and place one or more parcels of gold upon the wares, and wait outside the enclosure. The owners of the flesh, and other goods, then examine whether this be equal to the price or not. If so, they take the gold, and the others take the wares; if not, the latter still add more gold, or take back what they had already put down. The trade is carried on in this manner, because the languages are different, and they have no interpreter; it takes about five days to dispose of the goods which they bring with them."* Heeren, in his Historical Researches, connects the country where this system of barter was practised, with that of the Macrobians, or long-lived Ethiopians, mentioned by Herodotus. By an ingenious conclusion, he supposes that the altar or table of the Sun which characterized the latter people was the market-place, in which, at a later day, the trade with the strangers was transacted. My observations have also led me to the same conclusion, but I am able more distinctly to authenticate this, and to suggest additional and more direct evidence of its being the actual fact.

The worship of the Gongas, which has continued to the present time, is the adoration of the river that flows through their country, as being part of the

* Cosmas, pp. 138, 139. This author wrote about A.D. 535.

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sacred Nile. The Abi, or Nile of Bruce, is worshipped by the modern Adjows, whilst the Gibbee, or Abiah, is the object of a similar devotion among the Pagan Gongas of Zingero, and of Kuffah. We are enabled from our knowledge of the former river to presume, that its singular course determined in the first instance, a reverence, which, when the increasing encroachments of foreign foes had made this river a convenient defence to the pressed Gongas, was soon elevated to the character of a protecting deity. That its singular course should have thus attracted attention arises, I believe, from the circumstance of its encircling an extensive province, and going around it, as the sun was supposed to revolve around the earth. The zodiac, or track of the sun through the heavens, was typified by the form of a serpent, and this I have always understood to have been the source of that serpent-worship which characterized so many of the earlier and more civilized nations of the earth. In no country, was this idolatry more prevalent than upon the plateau of Abyssinia, and *Arwè*, the great serpent, it will be recollected figures considerably in the earlier history of the Amhara, who appear to have in some measure adopted the religion of the Gongas, when they took possession of the countries upon the left hand of their *father*, their *king*, their *sun*, by all of which names, it is usual, even at the present day, to designate the river Abi.

The great serpents of classic mythological history,

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the Hydra, the Python, and others unnamed, destroyed by Apollo and Hercules, all allude evidently to the worship of the serpent in Africa being superseded by that of the sun. The relation of these gods to that luminary is generally admitted, and *Hiero Calla*, fortunately for my derivation of the word *Galla*, the sun of the *blacks*, is the interpretative analysis of the name of Hercules. In the modern Dankalli language no other word is used for sun but *Hiero*, and it enters into the name of several names of places; Hyhilloo, the scene of the celebrated battle between the forces of Lohitu and the Muditu, is translated by the Dankalli to mean the hill of the sun.

The head of a sculptured Hercules is invariably portraited with the frizzly hair of the Dankalli, whilst antiquarian ethnologists will be interested to observe the persistance of national character preserved in the flowing locks and ample beard usually given to Jupiter, his European counterpart.

That which increased the celebrity of the northern portion of the table-land of Abyssinia, and established the superiority in dignity of its stream, was the circumstance of its flowing through the lake Tzana or Dembea. No little light breaks upon the subject when it is understood, that the literal interpretation of these two words in very different languages, is the same, both signifying the lake of the *sun*. Dembea, let me observe, is a word in use in Abyssinia that belongs to the same language

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as *Abi*, *Assa*, *Galla*, *Nil*, and others, that to avoid confusion, I have called *Arian*. That so many proper names, should all be derived from an Asiatic language in a country where no representatives of the modern people who speak it can now be found, is only to be accounted for, by supposing that the African original of the Arian family of man yet continues in some of the secluded oases of Intra-tropical Africa, to reward by their discovery future enterprize.

Bahr Dembea, or the Lake of the Sun, would give a very appropriate designation to the plateau upon which it is found. It was that, and the course of the Abi, which occasioned the country visited by the messengers of Cambyses to be called the Table of the Sun. It was also the presence of these singularly situated geographical features, and their supposed reference to the sun's track in the zodiac, that determined the reputed sanctity of this portion of Ethiopia in the classic ages.

The connexion of the ancient Persian empire with its Ethiopic tributary kingdoms, did not extend so far as the country of Sasu, and the fate of Cambyses, in his attempted conquest of that country, would be, I have no doubt, an instructive lesson to his successors. The claims of these monarchs to supremacy in Ethiopia appears, in fact, to have been founded upon former family connexion with some father-land in Africa, not situated upon the plateau of Abyssinia, then inhabited by the Gongas,

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but in another desert-surrounded country, of the same character; probably, that which surrounds the sources of the Bahr ul Abiad.

The African origin of other ancient nations can also be most easily demonstrated, and the historical accounts of their descent from gods, which have come down to us, although they consist of exaggerated and distorted relations, in consequence of having been derived from the ignorant translation of hieroglyphical records, in which it would appear that the earlier history of Africa was preserved; still we are able to gather from these mythological enigmas everything that is necessary to connect their origin with a common centre of divergence, which I believe to have been the country around the sources of the Nile.

In the same manner the worship of the rivers in India, and of the dragon monster in China, seem to have originated from Ethiopia; the emigration which carried the first colonies of serpent worshippers to these countries having probably flowed in a direction from the south, as Europe and Western Asia appear to have been civilized by colonists from the north of the same point of dispersion.

It is most interesting to trace the intimate connexion at an early period of the, at present, widely separated and even physically distinct varieties of man; and did not a cautious policy restrain me, I would attempt to demonstrate the original unity of nations now the most dissimilar upon novel evidence,

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which, to be satisfactory to others, must, however, receive farther corroboration than my own individual observations.

One illustration of the light African explorations promise to throw upon this subject I cannot refrain from advancing, as it is such a striking evidence of the presumed fact of even ourselves having originated from a colony of African emigrants; and that the ancient British temple of *Abury*, or *Abibury*, near Stonehenge, derived its name from the same religious worship being there celebrated as was once general on the plateau of *Abyssinia*, and which, in fact, is so called from exactly the same cause. The deductions of classical learning materially assist a traveller, whose pursuits, so different to a closet student, do not allow him to assume the character of a learned critic or commentator. Dr. Stukley, known by his inquiries into the ancient religion of the Druids, has proved, I think incontestably, the true character of the temple at *Abibury*, and demonstrates it to have been constructed in the form of a serpent, bearing upon its back a circle. He referred the religion, that directed such a form to be assumed in the sacred architecture of this people, to an Egyptian origin, and freely speculates, in consequence, upon the African origin of our ancestors, which is asserted by our most ancient historians, but who have been in consequence considered to be apocryphal. In these traditions it is affirmed that Britain was first

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inhabited by a celebrated descendant of Shem, singularly enough the same, who is considered by biblical ethnologists to have been the common father of no less a respectable people, than the modern Dankalli; Affer, the son of Abraham, having led a colony of Africans to our shores, where he introduced the worship of the sun, and established the religion of Druidism. I recommend to my reader the perusal of Stukley's work upon "Abury, a Temple of the Ancient Britons," and then to compare the parallel, but more magnificent temple of nature upon the plateau of Abyssinia, where the *serpent Arwè*, or in profane language the river Abi, bears upon its back the lake of the *sun*, most curiously identifying the peculiar worship of that luminary by the ancient Ethiopians with the same adoration which was professed by the Druids in Britain, but who, from their situation, were obliged to construct the winding avenue of stones at Abibury to represent the same mystical hieroglyphic of the serpent and the sun. The name given to this work was *Abi*, the *father*, or *king*, as it was also of the river-symbol in Abyssinia; hence the name *Abibury*, the latter portion of which word is of Saxon origin; and added, subsequently to the decline of Druidism.*

* Abi was also the title of prince among the ancient Himyaritic nation, and, slightly changed, is still given to the kings of the countries to the south of Shoa; for example, Aboo Bogaboo, king of Enarea; Abba Wabotoo, king of Kuchah.

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Returning to the Gongas and their connexion with the Sasu of Cosmas, it is singular to observe in what manner the seclusive integrity of that country was first sapped, and then in a great measure overthrown. Within the last two centuries, the Adjows of Northern Abyssinia, the representatives of the Gongas in that situation, were said to continue the original practice of their fathers with respect to commercial transactions. But these must have been a tribe now extinct, as, from what I can learn, it is only in the extreme south where the custom is still persisted in, and it is among these that the most ancient authentic record (uninspired) of the antediluvian world will be found. It is here, too, that the original name of this people, Sasu, is preserved in the modern word Susa, of whom, as a nation, we scarcely possess any information more than sufficient, to warrant the mere assertion that such a people now exist highly civilized, and using a peculiar written character dissimilar to any with which the literati of Europe are acquainted.

Of the Sasu traders in the time of Cosmas, we are told they carried with them oxen which, on their arrival in the country, they killed, and hung up the raw flesh on the thorns, as a kind of merchandise. It will be remembered that I have previously stated the intoxicating effects of this kind of food upon the Amhara, and I have therefore no difficulty in supposing that the Gongas were tempted

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by this kind of dissipation into the intercourse with the traders, just as in modern times, "fire water" for Indians, and opium for the Chinese are employed to effect a similar object. This receives further confirmation from the fact, that the secluded Gongas of the present day live entirely upon vegetables, the ensete plant and grain forming the principal food. In Zingero and Enarea, broken in upon by the Mahomedan and Christian religions, the inhabitants have adopted the use of animal food, but even among them a party of the older faith exists who continue the original mode of living of their fathers, and who are contemptuously styled, for that reason, "grain eaters."

The Gongas that I have seen are of short stature, not exceeding five feet four inches, are delicately made, and of a pale yellow complexion. The aperture of the eyelid in some were quite straight, but in others it was obliquely divided. Their hair was straight and strong. A triangular formed face, the forehead being low and long, and the chins very pointed. I could not convince myself, as I looked at their whole appearance, but that they were of the same race as the Hottentots of the Cape, differing only in so much as that the latter are in a very degraded state. Many remarkable customs practised by both nations could not have been merely coincidental; and one, that of voluntary semi-emasculation, is too extraordinary not to be referred to the same origin of imposition.

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Of the identity of the two people there can be no doubt, and there is no ethnological fact I observed during my journey of which I am so well satisfied as this.

The remains of this interesting people in Northern Abyssinia are the Adjows and the Falasha, and if future travellers will expend their resources in exploring Northern Abyssinia, in preference to the far more important examination of its southern portion, they cannot occupy themselves more advantageously to science than by examining into the customs and characters of the Adjows. I consider it would be a waste of time that could be occupied much better in another direction, or I would, for my own satisfaction, visit the country for this purpose; but as it is far from difficult and constitutes an excellent probationary journey, I recommend aspirants for fame in the field of African discovery to make this their trial excursion.

One more remark upon the Southern Gongas of Enarea, Zingero, and Kuffah, and I must close this notice of a very interesting race of man; and that is to explain the apparent anomaly of their country, situated at such an elevation above the level of the sea as I presume it to be, producing cotton and grapes in profusion.

The observations of that indefatigable and enterprising traveller, Dr. Beke, has proved that the river Abi, after flowing a distance of scarcely one hundred

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and thirty miles, has excavated a valley five or six thousand feet below the general level of the table land, whilst the opposite summits of the bounding sides are distant between thirty and forty miles. We may look in vain over every portion of the known world for a similar effect of denudation, and this again illustrates the wide field of novel facts which is promised to science, by an examination of the unknown interior of Africa.

On the artificial terraces and natural slopes of these extensive valleys the vegetables of all climates can be successfully cultivated, and the theoretical centre of successive elevations from whence, according to the hypothesis of Linnæus, all vegetation spread over the rest of the earth, appears to exist in the natural phenomena presented, by the surface geography of the Abyssinian table mountain. The country of the Gongas is similarly excavated by the deeply cut channel of the Gibbee, or the Red Nile, which, much larger than the Abi on the northern portion of the plateau, will have a greater extent of denuded valley for the production of those vegetables of a hot climate, the presence of which have been such an argument in favour of those, who contend that the water-shed of the Gibbee must be towards the lowlands in the South, where it is presumed these vegetables could only have been cultivated.

The other slaves I examined at Musculo's, were a few Amhara from Guragué, but who contributed

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but little to my previous information, upon the subject of their character and country. I noticed there were no Dankalli among those brought down for my inspection; and was given to understand that none of these people were ever brought into Abyssinia as slaves; and if they were, no one would purchase them, for they would neither remain with their masters, nor would they work. Even in this, their true Circassian origin is betrayed; for, although their morality does not prevent them from selling their own daughters, this caste of mankind cannot be enslaved. The superiority of this mentally endowed race is manifest, even in their most barbarous state; and I have been led, therefore, to disbelieve the general presumption, that the Negro is universally the type of man in his most degraded condition. From what I have observed myself, the Dankalli, the Shankalli, and the Bushmen, are the lowest grades of the three varieties of the human race, the Arian, or Circassian, the Amhara, or Negro, and the Gonga, or Mongolian, all of whom have a height of civilization, and a depth of barbarism distinct from each other; and that, however, the Bushman may be improved, he will only become a civilized Chinese, and that a Negro may by education be made an ancient Egyptian, but would never by that alone become the enlightened Circassian, that his neighbour, the Dankalli, could, certainly, be made.

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I have now exhausted, not my subject, the numerous ideas upon which I have latterly been most inconveniently obliged to crowd together, but the very limited space that I had proposed to myself in my ignorance of book-making, as being sufficient to contain all I had to say respecting my journey, and the ideas and incidents which occurred to me during my sojourn in Abyssinia. Much to my surprise, the manuscript has grown under my hand, and the greatest difficulty that I have had, has been to arrive at the period I have done, before I laid down the pen.

From this date, however, September the 3rd, having returned to Aliu Amba, from Ankobar, I was confined some time entirely to my bed, during which period my note-book presents such a series of entries, "no better to-day," that I have taken the opportunity thus afforded me of concluding my narrative.

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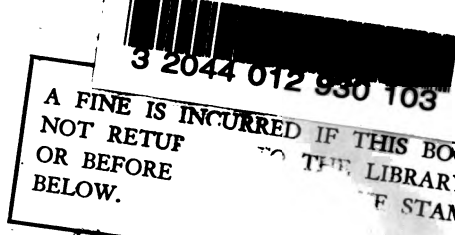

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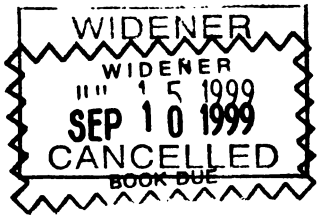

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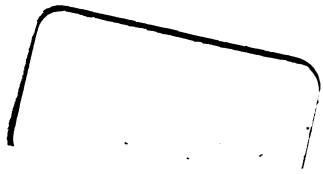

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